TOPICA SACRA:

Spiritual Lo

SOME BRIEF

HIN TS & HELI

Faith, Meditation, Pra
Comfort and *Holineſs*

Communicated at *Chriſt-Church, DU*

By THOMAS HARRISON, Minis
Goſpel.

Enlarged with *SPIRITUAL PLEADI*
in above XXX *Caſes*, By Mr. *John*
Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Ayr*.

KIRKBRIDE,

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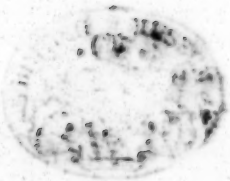

4410. g. 31

TO HIS

EXCELLENCY;

The Lord *Henry Cromwel*, Lord Deputy of *Ireland*.

May it pleaſe Your Excellency,

THE *reaſon why I ſuffer* this *Diſcourſe to go abroad, and not ſome others, (though urged by* Friends, *yea commanded thereunto by* Your Excellency *and the* Council,*) is partly to beg* Pardon *for that* Diſobedience, *partly to evidence, that it was no defect in my* Will, *but in my* Notes *and manner of writing, that hindred me from paying* that Obſervance, *which now* I *yield*; *But eſpecially, becauſe* the Spirit of God, *(for* mine own, *or a* worſe, *neither could, or would ever have done any ſuch good office for me*; *I ſay therefore undoubtedly* the Spirit of God *) by theſe*

and the like Injections *and* Intimations, *helping me to plead and preſs them, and to* hold *them* up before the Lord, *and to* ſpread *them before Him, as* Hezekiah *did the* Letter, *hath many a time, ſuſtained and cheared mine own heart, and ſo renewed the face of that earth after much* Winter weather, *after many* Trials, Troubles *and* Tremblings: *for when God ſpeaks, where are the* Lips *that will not* quiver at His voice? *Into whoſe bones will not rottenneſs enter? and happy they, and they only, who now tremble in themſelves,* that they may reſt in the day of trouble.

Hab. 3. 16.

This, *(not to mention any other ground) gives me ſome ſmall glimmering of hope, that the ſame* Powerful Spirit, *may be pleaſed alſo, further to manage and improve the ſame* Medium, *to the relief and advantage of others: and (I can ſay it) it is uſefulneſs and ſervice that I have aimed at in this enterprize.*

Amongſt all the Helps *to Devotion that I have ſeen, (I mean* Books ſo intitled, *commonly containing ſome* Forms of Prayers) *I remember not any thing, at all of kin to this* Undertakeing, *which tends to help the* Gift, *not to ſtint the* Spirit of Prayer, *and only layes a few ſticks together, (pointing to the* Wood *where-*

more

more may be had) which by His own breath, *He may be pleaſed to* kindle.

Whatever ſtrangers, either in place or affection may imagine, I know Your Excellency *to be a* Pleader, *and (I hope)* a Prevailer with God *daily.*

I therefore offer this poor Eſſay *unto* You, *not ſo much* by way *of* Aſſiſtance, *as of* Acknowledgment *that under God You have been and are the Inſtrumental cauſe of my enjoying a fullneſs of Opportunities, of doing ſome ſervice in my* Generation; *the value whereof I deſire daily to renew upon my Heart, above all the things that this World can afford, or brittle Mortality enjoy.*

As it hath been Your Lordſhips mercy, *that hitherto you have had help from on High, to know and Love the Lord, His* Name *and* Image *where ever you diſcern it, and to walk acceptably with Your God, and uſefully to his People, for which you have your Record on High, your Witneſs amongſt men, and in your own Boſom: ſo it is now become your* Obligation, *and only Intereſt, ſtill to be found in the ſame wayes of Righteouſneſs; wherein that you may perſevere unto the End: and that your Path may be, as the* ſhining Light, which ſhineth out more and more unto the perfect day! *That You, your moſt precious*

precious Consort *and hopeful* Children, *may prove an inestimate Blessing in this World, and eternally Blessed in that to come, is, and shall be the daily prayer of,*

(My Lord)

Your Excellencies *worthless but most willing Servant.*

Tho. Harrison.

Lemmata

Lemmata Casuum.

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ERRATA.

IN the former part of this Book, done by Mr. *Harriſon*, there are a few literal Eſcapes, in ſome copies, which the Candid Reader may eaſily amend, as follows; Page 14. l. 6. read *thee*. and line 14. r. *pleading*. p. 15. l. 8. r. *thee*. p. 22. l. 29. r. *certainly*, and l. 30. r. *Arguments*. p. 55. l. 28. r. *extra*. p. 60. l. 15. for *to*, read *by*. p. 62. l. 1. r. *Good*. p. 65. l. 25. r. *this the*. p. 67. l. 10. r. *bitter*. p. 75. l. 12. r. *Chriſt*. p. 77. l. 23. r. *thou*. p. 93. l. 1. r. *neither troubled*. p. 102. l. 17. for *a*, read *the*. p. 116. l. 12. for ſtate *or* ſtation, read ſtate *and* ſtation. p. 172. l. 23. read *Paganiſh*. p. 148. line ult. r. *decimam*.

Topica Sacra;

Spiritual Logick.

JOB 23. 3, 4.

O That I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his ſeat! I would order my cauſe before him, and fill my mouth with Arguments.

HOly *Job*, poor now, even to a Proverb, and miſerable to a Prodigy, perceiving his friends Diſcourſes were fuller of *Reproaches* than *Conſolations*, neglects to anſwer them, and reſolves to get him to God, the only Support and Refuge of the miſerable.

And thus he entertains himſelf in the ſecond verſe, even to day, after all that hath been ſaid, *Exaſperatio eſt querela Dolus in meus* the bitterneſs of my complaint is ra- *locutus.*

ther increaſed than allayed; wherefore no wonder my mouth is alwiſe open to breath out complaints; and the more I complain, the more I ſuffer from you, (ſo ſome) or rather from God himſelf, whoſe hand I acknowledge in all theſe ſtroaks; and let me complain as long as I will my tongue is not ſo *eloquent* in complaining as his hand is heavy that ſtrikes me; my ſtroak is heavier than my groaning.

Quo magis queror, eo a Vobis magis vapulo. Grotius in loc.

And yet for all this, *verſe* 3. he ſighs after a Treaty, after a nearer acceſs and approach unto him that ſmites him; he quites his ſeeming *friends* to make after his ſeeming *Enemy*, and is willing to make this enemy his *Judge*, and to refer all to him.

And then, verſe 4. He thinks with himſelf how he would manage his matters, how he would beſtir himſelf, and not loſe his cauſe for want of pleading, could he but get a day of hearing; I would order my cauſe before him, and fill my mouth with Arguments.

Some think he wiſhes for a Guide, a Friend to help him to ſuch an opportunity. *Quis det noſſem* (ſaith *Druſius*) *quis mihi tribuat ut cognoſcam* (ſaith *the Vulgar*) *quis dabit ſcirem* (ſaith *Montanus*) *quis eſt qui poſſit facere*

Core ut valeam accedere (saith the Syriac) he would fain find an Angel to conduct him to the Throne of God (saith *Senault*) or rather the Angel of the Covenant to afford him that προσαγωγὴν that *Manuduction* which the Apostle speaks of, as the known privilege of all Believers, who through him *have an access by one Spirit unto the Father, Eph.* 2. 18. In his Paraphrase upon the place.

But not to darken the words in stead of explaining them, by giving the various readings and opinions of Interpreters, I will draw out some observations, and hasten to that I desire to insist on.

Observ. 1. The sorest stroaks cannot drive away good souls from God, but rather draw them nearer to him. My stroak is heavier then my groaning; yet O that I knew where I might find him! *Observat.*

2. God himself, even for his own sake, is the great Object of a Saint's seekings. O that I knew where I might find him! not this or that to be gotten by him.

3. Precious souls that have a large *Interest* in God, are sometimes at a loss, as to his sweet and sensible *Presence*; The great God hath his unknown *Retreats*, whether his best friends cannot

follow him. So verſe 8, 9. *Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward but I cannot percieve him; on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him; he hideth himſelf on the right hand that I cannot ſee him.* So holy *David*, *Pſal.* 63. 1. *O God, thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee.* You ſee his *Intereſt* is clear; he can ſay thou art my God, and yet he had but little *enjoyment* of him: his ſoul thirſteth, longeth, followeth hard after him, *ver.* 8. Such another ſigh ye have, *Pſal* 101. 2. *O when wilt thou come unto me?* Do not conclude ye have no intereſt, becauſe ye have little enjoyment; no Union, becauſe ye want Viſion.

4. A gracious heart ſeldom or never thinks it ſelf near enough unto God, its Sun and Shield, and Center: *O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his ſeat!*

5. Gods Judgement-ſeat where he ſits to hear and determine cauſes, is not terrible or unapproachable to a Believer, who knows it to be a Throne of Mercy, as *Job* here did; for, ſays he, *verſe* 6. how would he uſe me, if he had me there? would he overwhelm me with his greatneſs? will he plead againſt me with his abſolute Power?

No;

No, but he would put ſtrength in me: Happy are all that can ſay ſo, for we muſt all appear there, 2. *Cor.* 5. 10, 11. and it will be terrible to all thoſe that do not often reſort thither afore-hand.

6. A poor afflicted creature often thinks he hath a great deal to ſay unto God, if he could but get an hearing; he thinks how he would order and argue out the matter: what a ſtory he would tell him, if he could but get his ear, gain acceſs and audience from him.

7. It's good to have our hearts and mouths fil'd with Arguments when we come to plead and Expoſtulate, and reaſon out our great concernments with our God.

This is the point I pitch on, to expell that ſpirit of ſlumber, which hath ſo much weakned the ſpirit of Prayer in our days, that comparatively they are but little enriched by it, who trade to Heaven with it, where God hath all good things lying ready by him, and waiting only for Prayer to come and fetch them away.

When Chriſt himſelf would give us a perfect Pattern of Prayer, both for matter and manner, he winds and wraps up all with a concluſion, *Mat.* 6. 13. conſiſting of certain reaſons to perſwade

God to hear our prayers, or at leaſt to perſwade and aſſure our ſelves, that he doth and will hear them: the reaſons have an influence into all and every one of the Petitions; *Thine is the Kingdom*; and therefore we expect that as a good King thou ſhouldſt receive and anſwer our Petitions: it is thy concernment as a King to have thine honour advanced, therefore hallow thine own name, glorifie it in the Church, let thy Kingdom come to it, advance thy Will in it, ſuſtain us thy Subjects, pardon our ſins, keep and defend us from Evils.

Pſal. 72. 12, 13, 14. 15.

So *Thine is the Power*, which Kings often times want; but thou art able to exalt thine own name, to extend thy Kingdom over all, to fit us to do thy will, to miniſter to our neceſſities, to pardon our ſins, to preſerve us from all Evils.

2. King. 6. 26, 27.

And thine is the Glory; The hallowing of thy Name is the chief part of thy glory; thy Kingdom the prime place of thy glory; herein art thou glorified, when we obey thy Will, when thou provideſt for thy people, forgiveſt their ſins, preſerveſt and delivereſt them from their Enemies; therefore do thou all theſe things for us; therefore do we truſt and hope that thou wilt do all theſe things for us.

Thus

Thus our blessed Saviour doth *direct* us, and thus the blessed Saints have *practised* in all Ages.

When the people of *Israel* had made the molten Calf, and committed Idolatry with it, and God was about to destroy them for it, see how *Moses* in his prayer for them lays hold on the avenging hand of God, and stays it by *reasoning* and *arguing*, from the dishonour that would redound unto God if he should destroy them; and from the *Covenant* that he had made with their fathers, *Exod.* 32. 11, 12, 13, *&c.* And *Moses* besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people which thou hast brought forth out of the Land of *Egypt* with great power and with a mighty hand? (thou art now greatly engaged in the business) the *Egyptians* will slander thy gracious *Intentions*, and say it was for mischief with a purpose to slay and consume them. Remember *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Israel* thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self that thou wouldst deal otherwise with their Posterity: and see how he prevails *verse* 14. The Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people. So when he would have destroyed

ſtroyed them for murmuring, *Moſes* interpoſeth again for a pardon, and fills his mouth with *Arguments*, *Numb.* 14. 13, &c. The *Egyptians* will hear it, and they'l tell ſtories of thee to the Inhabitants of this Land, and they'l *ſlander* thy *Power*, and ſay, becauſe thou wert not able to carry them any further, thou didſt rid thy hands of them in the Wilderneſs; Now therefore I beſeech thee, ſhew what thou canſt do, put forth the greatneſs of thy power in pardoning, as thou haſt ſpoken of thy ſelf, and as thou haſt practiſed hitherto in forgiving this people from *Egypt* even untill now. And ſee how he carries it at again, *verſe* 20. *The Lord ſaid I have pardoned according to thy word.*

So *Abraham*, before him, *Gen.* 18. 23, 24, 25. *Wilt thou alſo deſtroy the Righteous with the wicked? that be far from thee to do*; after this manner to ſlay (*pell mell*) the righteous with the wicked, and that the righteous ſhould be as the wicked; that be far from thee; ſhall not the *Judge* of all the earth do right? And you know how he ſhrunk up and narrowed the number, till he thought he had got within the verge of *Lot*'s Family, and expected that ſhould afford ſo many righteous perſons

as

as he named; but he was out in his charitable *conjecture*; otherwiſe he had not fail'd in what he pleaded for. He gained *ground* at every *advance*, and God yielded till *Abraham* thought he had *Enough*, and ſo preſſed him no further.

Thus *Joſhua* when the people were ſmitten at *Ai*, *Joſh.* 7. 7, 8, 9. *Alas, O Lord God*, ſays he, *wherefore haſt thou at all brought us over* Jordan? *or was it our* Ambition *and* Covetouſneſs *that brought us over?* would to God we had been content and dwelt on the other ſide *Jordan.* O Lord God, what ſhall I ſay when *Iſrael* that (us'd to be victorious) turneth their backs before their enemies! and now they'l all hear of it and environ us round, and cut off *our* name from the earth; and if that were the worſt, it were no great matter; but what wilt thou do unto *thy* great *Name?* that will hardly ſwim if ours ſink, they are ſo twiſted together, ſo imbarqued in the ſame bottom; and though *Ours* be Vile, That's Precious; though *ours* deſerve to rot, what hath that deſerved? and think what thou art about to do to *thy* great Name. Thus *Hezekiah* in his ſickneſs, *Iſa.* 38. 2, 3. *Remember now O Lord, I beſeech thee*

how I have walked before thee in truth; I have had an Honeſt heart towards thee, thou knoweſt it; and muſt I now be cut off untimely? when all things are ſo unſetled now or never is the time for thee to give Teſtimony to my ſincerity; and you know he had a Reprive preſently brought him.

Thus he Argues in his diſtreſs becauſe of *Senacherib*, 2. *Kings* 19. 15, &c. *They have indeed made work with the gods of the Nations, and caſt them into the fire, becauſe they were* no *Gods; but now that they come to meddle with thee and thy people, let them find it too* hot *for them, and let all the Kingdoms of the earth know that thou art the Lord God, even thou only.*

Thus *Aſa*, 2. Chron. 14. 11. *O Lord our God, we* reſt *on thee, thou art* our *God, let not man prevail againſt* thee.

Thus *Jehoſaphat*, 2. Chr. 20. 6, &c.

Thus *Daniel*, Chap. 9. to the 20. ver. &c. Thus *Amos* Chap. 7. *ver.* 2, 3, 5, 6.

Thus the Apoſtles, *Act.* 4. *ver.* 24. to 31.

Not that God ſtands in need of our *informing* him concerning our neceſſities, which He *knows* better then we; but becauſe hereby we give ſome proof that we are not altogether ſtrangers at home (as many careleſs ones are) but *know* ſomething

something of *our selves*, and our own *cases*, and of him *How* and his *dealings* towards us: But I will give no other *grounds* for the point, then those of *Jobs* resolution for this practice; and they are these.

1. Upon earnest arguing God will undoubtedly *answer* some way or other; that's implyed, *vers.* 5. *I would know the words that he would* answer *me, and understand what he would say unto me.* An answer I may be sure of when I fill my mouth with *arguments*; he will not sit still and say nothing; he will not sit like an Image, like a dumb Idol, as the Abominations of the Heathens, their *Dii Stercorei*, their dunghil-Gods (as *Tremel.* they are called, *Deut.* 29. 17.) must of necessity do; they can do no otherwise, though men *fill* their *mouthes* with *Arguments*, and *empty* their *veins* of their *blood* before them, 1. *Kings* 18. 28.

No says *Job*, he will undoubtedly *answer* could I but have my fill of pleading; and I might guess at his designs by his answers (which are now too wonderfull for me) I might understand what meaneth the heat of this great Burning and wherefore he *contendeth* with me, and what he Means and *intends* towards his poor creature.

Arguments

Arguments then in prayer are not likly to go unanſwered, and praying Souls find it ſo.

Sometimes he anſwers *gloriouſly* from his ſecret place of Thunder, yet not in Thunder but in Lightning, in ſome glorious irradiation, in ſome precious melting *Promiſe* born in upon the heart with a ſtrong hand, and there Engraven in indelible Characters by an irreſiſtible power, whereof gracious ſouls in our days have had abundant experience.

Sometimes he anſwers in ſome *ſecret ſupport* only, as *Hannah* after her arguing and pouring forth her ſorrowful ſoul into his Boſom, when ſhe had left her petition in his *hand*, or but laid it down at his *feet*; though ſhe had no other *Fiat* then what was written on her heart by an inviſible finger, yet ſhe went her way well apaid, and fell to her meat, and her countenance was no more ſad, 1. *Sam.* 1. 18.

And ſurely one or the other of theſe made *David* cloſe up ſo many Pſalms with Praiſes & Rejoycings, which he had begun with tears and mourning; an obvious obſervation, & clear evidence that even whilſt he was on his knees before the Lord, the wind came about and blew upon him out of a warm corner, and made all his *ſpices flow.* Sam. 8

Sometimes God anſwers in ſome *providential diſpenſations*, which both *gratifie* us for the preſent, and might *inſtruct* us for the future; for many, very many Providences are *Prophetical*, and do foreſhew things to come; but the language of Prophecies is for the moſt part *obſcure*, and we ſeldom underſtand it, till God interpret it in the accompliſhment; an Inſtance whereof we have in *Acts*, 7. 25. *Moſes* his defending the *Iſraelite*, and avenging him that was oppreſſed, and ſmiting the *Egyptian*, had a further reach, drift and ſcope in it, than barely that preſent vindication: *for he ſuppoſed his Brethren would have underſtood how that God by his hand would deliver them, but they underſtood not:* no more do we many times the full *Extent* and *Import* of a diſpenſation which *ecchoes* to Prayer; yet for the moſt part we pick ſomething out of it to ſtay the ſtomack, and to afford *Support*, if not *ſatisfaction.*

Plead then, and fill your Mouths with *Arguments*; for when ever you do ſo, beyond all peradventure God will *anſwer.*

Secondly, There's no fear that he will interpret this ſawcineſs and preſumption in thee, and ſo anſwer thee with

with his Fists about thine ears, or with his foot to kick thee out of his presence; there is no fear that he will smother thee under the weight of his Greatness, or dazle the with his beams, or burn the with his flames, or drive the from the Judgment seat (as *Gallio* did the *Jews*, *Act.* 18. 16.) No he never beats his people lower then their knees, and thence suffers them, yea helps them to rise again; nay he will lay his hand upon thy head, yea under thy feet to do thee good; He will *stroke* rather than *strike* a pleadinsi Soul; He will *strengthen* Thee, and put Mettal into Thee; this is *Job* s consideration in the sixth verse, Will he plead against me with his great and absolute Power, by which he may do vvhat he pleaseth vvith his poor Creatures? Will he serve me so? No, but he vvould put *strength* in me: Thus he dealt with *Daniel*, Chap. 10. 19.

Thirdly, There the *Righteous* may *plead* and dispute with him even at the Bar of Equity and Justice, yea and the Judge cannot but pronounce and pass sentence in their favour; that's his encouragement, *verse* 7. there the *Righteous* may plead vvith him, and so shall I be delivered for ever from my Judge, never more dread him as a Judge, but so

so as withall to love him, and live with him as a *Father*.

There righteous *Jeremy* pleads with him, *Jer.* 12. 1, &c. *Righteous art thou O Lord, when I plead with thee:* (there's no question to be made of that, that admits of no dispute) *yet let me talk with thee of thy Judgements.*

There he invites his people to come and plead freely, *Isa.* 43. 26. *Put me in remembrance, let us plead together, declare thou that thou mayest be justified.* If thou hast any thing to say for thy self, say on.

Nay even Idolaters shall have this fair play, permission to plead for themselves, and for their dumb Idols too, if they have any thing to say for them, *Isa.* 41. 21. *Produce your Cause saith the Lord, bring forth your strong Reasons, saith the King of Jacob.* Have Idolaters this Liberty, and not the true Worshippers that worship in Spirit and Truth? The *Wicked* shall they have it, and not the *Righteous*? Yes doubtless, this is that παῤῥησία, (translated boldness of speech, 2. *Cor.* 7. 4.) mentioned as the great privilege of the Saints, especially now under the New Testament, *Heb.* 10. 19, &c. Ἔχοντες οὖν, παῤῥησίαν εἰς τὴν εἴσοδον, having therefore *boldness* to enter

Eph. 3. 12. Heb. 4. 16. *Accedamus cum loquendi libertate ad thronum gratiæ.* Beza.

enter into the holieſt by the blood of Jeſus, (a Right and Freedom to enter in our perſons hereafter, and novv by our prayers) let us dravv near vvith a true heart, in full aſſurance of Faith.

Object. 1. But may ſome ſay, There the *righteous* indeed may plead vvith him, and not be caſt in their ſuit; But vvhere are thoſe *righteous* Ones? And vvho are they? for it is not ſo vvith me: God be mercifull to me a grievous *ſinner*; I dare not be ſo bold vvith him; *Iniquity* muſt *ſtop her mouth.*

Anſwer. I anſwer, Every one that hath a *ſhare* in, yea a *ſincere* deſire after the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, is *righteous* before him, and may in that Righteouſneſs Plead and Prevail, and as a Prince have Power with God; For this is his own *Righteouſneſs*, of his own Contrivance and Appointment: *The Righteouſneſs which is of God by Faith*, Phil. 3. 8, 9. A Righteouſneſs Spun and Woven out of his own bowels, and the obedience of his dear Son; a better than ever came upon the back of Angels, for which the perſonal and legal Righteouſneſs of a *Paul*, of an Angel, is to be abandoned; *Evangelical* being far better than *Angelical* Righteouſneſs. 'Tis ſaid, when *Pilat* appeared in Chriſts Garment

Garment which he had got from the Soldiers, *Cæſar* could never be angry with him; 'tis certain thou canſt not miſs a Bleſſing in his Garments, who is not aſhamed to be called thine Elder Brother, who came to change *cloaths* & *places* with thee, and to take all upon himſelf, that thou mighteſt eſcape. The Father cannot but be well pleaſed with the ſmell of his Son's raiment; & he ſits too upon a ſeat of *Judgment*, & muſt do thee Right; and Juſtice it ſelf (which will not be twice pay'd) is as much for thee, as much thy friend as Mercy, *Rom.* 3. 26. *He is Juſt, and yet* (nay therefore) *a Juſtifier of him that believeth on Jeſus.* So that if thou art not utterly ſhut up in unbelief, if their be but the leaſt ſpark of true Faith alive in thy heart, thou mayeſt plead and proſper.

But I have nothing to ſay for my ſelf; my heart is dryed up like a Potſheard, and withered like graſs. I have *ſin'd* away all *arguments*, and muſt never *open my Mouth any more before him.* *Object.* 2.

1 True, not to *Boaſt*, but to *Plead* thou mayeſt. *Anſw.*

2 And haſt thou nothing to offer? not a ſigh? not the groanings of thy Soul? this was *Job*'s preface, *ver.* 2. My *ſtroke*

is heavier then my *groning*. *O that I knew where I might find him!* where the *heart* is full as *Job* s was (you may perceive it by his sighing) the *Mouth* will not be *empty*; a full heart will fill the mouth some way or other; if the heart be full of *affection*, the mouth will be full of *arguments*. They deceive their own souls who say their Hearts are as Good as the best (they thank God) though they make no shew, when neither God nor men can hear ought that's good come from them. Psal. 37. 30. *The mouth of the Righteous speaketh Wisdom; and his Tongue talketh of Judgement.* Why so? *Ver.* 31. *The Law of his God is in his heart*; that sets his *tongue* a going the right way; and on the contrary, some mens stinking *breath bewrays* their *inward parts* to be very *rottenness*; they have not so much sweet breath as to make a sigh of; if the want of *words* were all, it were a small matter; that *inarticulate Language* of sighs and groans is powerful *Rhetorique*: *Let the sighing of the Prisoners come before thee* (saith *David*, Psal. 79. 11.) *according to the Greatness of thy power preserve thou those that are appointed to die: And for the oppression of the Poor, and for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise,* (*saith the Lord*

Lord himſelf, Pſal. 12. 5.) *I will ſet him in ſafety from him that puffeth at him.* We own *help* from the Spirit, when we are enlarged. *Paul* ſaith, he *helps* us, even when we are *ſtraitned*; likewiſe the Spirit alſo *helpeth* our infirmities; for we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought; (no not *Paul* and the Apoſtles) but the Spirit *it ſelf* maketh Interceſſion for us with groanings which cannot be uttered, *Rom.* 8. 26. στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις with unutterable *ſtraitnings*; our Enlargements may be but the *flowings* of the *Gifts* of the Spirit; but our inward pinchings and *coarctations* may be the *Interceſſion* of the Spirit *it ſelf*; the more immediate operations of the Spirit. And we forget that there is ſuch a Prompter behind the hangings; ſuch an *Interpreter* (as his Title ſignifies, as well as Comforter; yea therefore a Comforter, becauſe an Interpreter) to make known the mind of God to us, and ours to him; and as he *betrays* the ſecrets of God to the Saints, ſo he *rips* up their hearts before God (without doing any wrong, either in the one or other) and 'tis he who fills their mouths not only with windy words, but weighty *Arguments*.

Joh. 14. 26. *ille ſuggeret vobis omnia.* Vid. *Camero. ad* Mat. 19. 3. παρέκλητος.

3 Haſt thou nothing to *complain* of to

thy *Judge*? no Sin, no Devil, no Diabolical Temptations, no Superdiabolical corruptions, no ſpiritual Plunderers, no Egyptian Taſk-maſters, no cruel Bondage that makes thy life bitter to thee? no Enemy coming in as a flood to oppreſs and do thee wrong? no Iron yoak that galls thy ſhoulders? no Violence and Spoil to cry out and complain of? Sure thou haſt not *ſtudied* thine own caſe; thou haſt not *ordered* thy *cauſe* aright, if this *fountain* fail thee.

But will this be admitted? may the poor ſoul ſay; all *Complaints* are troubleſome, men cannot endure them. I Anſwer, God will. *Out of the abundance of my Complaint and Grief have I ſpoken hitherto*, ſays *Hannah*, 1. *Sam.* 1. 16. and you know how ſhe ſped.

Nay the word rendered *Arguments*, I find by the Latine Interpreters rendred *Redargutionibus*, *Increpationibus*. *Job* in ſome caſe is *Defendant*, as to the Charges drawn up againſt him by his friends; But here he is *Plaintiffe* alſo; could I come near the Bar, (ſayes he) I would make my *moan*: the whole Court of Heaven ſhould Ring out and be made ſenſible of my ſufferings.

Correptionibus. Mont. *Lite*, Syr.

But we are well enough with our Engliſh tranſlation of the word, and it

is

is warranted by the beſt Criticks; the word ſignifying all proceedings, all *arguments*, and Reaſons uſed in a cauſe, by either party, and contains all that can be *alledged* or urged by a poor creature any way in his own defence, or for his advantage.

Sane argumenta quæ utringue proferuntur à partibus in lite pro cauſa ſua. תוכחות Druſius.

4. There are ſome Arguments yet in *Archivis*, in the Rolls and Records of heaven which were never yet imbezled; they ly in the Ark of the Covenant, hid with Chriſt in God, (under double lock and key,) where neither *Moth nor Ruſt can come to corrupt, nor Thief break through to ſteal*; yea, they ly (many of them) in the very heart and boſome, and Being of God himſelf. I hope we ſhall meet with ſome of them anon, and that they may meet with the very caſe of thy ſoul, and that thy ſoul may meet with God in the making uſe of them.

But what will Arguments work upon God? that King Eternal is not ſwayed but by Eternal conſiderations; He knows no motives but his own bowels, and the Merits and Mediation of his Son and Spirit. *Object.* 3.

1 'Tis true, and well for thee and me that 'tis ſo; otherwiſe Time-accidents and Time-exacerbations, had long e're *Anſ.*

this hurried us into a woful Eternity! past all relief, by way of Argumentation; hell, not Heaven, had been filled with our complainings!

2. Hath he not given thee those two great friends of his for thine Advocats? the one at his own right hand in Heaven moving and negotiating, and alwayes appearing for thee; the *other* seated in thy breast, (though once a Cage for every unclean and hatefull Bird) the Dove alights and abides upon that dunghil, and will not be frayed away: and the voyce of that *Turtle* is heard in our Land; yea the Fathers *own heart* is full of love, brim-full and running over upon thee; and this continually *pleads* for thee, and makes all thine arrows which fly upwards, inevitable, not one is shot in vain.

3. Good Arguments in Prayer do shew the *necessity* of Prayer, and great *equity* for obtaining the things prayed for; and so do very much confirm our Faith, and fire our affections, and enable a man to break through many Discouragements, which Satan or his own heart may cast in to hinder Prayer: and ceratinly though their be no need of Argments to work upon God, their is to work upon us; though not to

move

move his love, yet to *remove* our unbelief; though not to prevail upon him to give, yet to prepare our ſelves to receive Mercy.

The only *Uſe* I ſhall make of the Point, ſhall be to preſs all to make uſe of it, to put it in Practice daily; it will pleaſe your Heavenly Father very well; He loves to hear his Children Reaſon it out with him, and he doth of ſet purpoſe delay to grant their Requeſts ſometimes, becauſe he loves to hear often from them, to hear their Voices, and ſee their Faces; He loves to hear what they can ſay for themſelves. So he dealt with the Woman of *Canaan*; He firſt ſeemed not to hear her, then did deny her ſuit, and then gave a very ſharp and cutting Reaſon of his Denial, Becauſe ſhe was but a *Dog*, ſhe was none of the *Iſraelites* who were his Children; But when Chriſt hears her wiſe Anſwer to his Objection: *Truth Lord, but the Dogs eat the Crumbs that fall from their Maſter's table*, (which was a ſtrong Piece of *Logick*,) ſhe received an high commendation of her Faith, and a Grant that would be ſure to pleaſe her, *Her will*; *O woman great is thy Faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt*, Mat. 15. 21, 22, &c. *USE.* Cant. 2. 14.

She Retorts his own weapon upon him, and he yields and gives her whats dangerous, if not good, her own *Will.*

My purpose is, (leaving all other wayes of Application or Enlargement) to speak to some principal *CASES* of greatest *concernment* and most frequent *occurrency* in our lives: and I shall only break the Ice in each case, (for *facile est inventis addere*) to set your *Wits* a work, which men, which Christians make least use of in their greatest occasions; we triffle in serious things, and are serious only in Triffles, or rather to rouze up your *Graces* in the holy A-
2. Tim. 1. 6. postle's phrase, ἀναζωπυρεῖν, To stir up the Fire which lyes raked up & buried under the ashes of sloth and supine oscitancy, or rather indeed to Jog *the Spirit of Prayer* which lies dormant in many bosoms, and doth them little service. I would but set that Plough a going which too many cast in the hedge as almost useless: which yet if well managed, would fill your Garners with all manner of store: And to which whosoever puts his Hand without (too often) looking back, shall be *fit for the Kingdom of GOD.*

CASE

CASE I.

Unacquaintedneſs with the Lord.

FIRST then, Is *Unacquaintedneſs with GOD* thy Miſery, the matter of thy moan and mourning? is this thy Complaint (as 'tis of the moſt knowing) that ſo little a Portion is heard of Him? that neither the Thunder of his Power, nor the Charms of his *LOVE* are ſufficiently Underſtood by thee; We rather *are known of him*, than that we can ſay, *we know him*, *Gal.* 4. 9. & where, or who is he hath no need to plead in this particular? Some make this to be *Job*'s caſe, in this very text; For thus they render it, *Utinam noſſem Deum et invenirem eum*: O that I *knew* God, then I ſhould find him. He that knows God, hath found him; and he ſhall never find him who never knows him. His Friend that ſpake laſt had adviſed him, *Chap.* 22. *v.* 21. *Acquaint now thy ſelf with him, and be at peace*, &c. and it may be 'tis thereunto that he anſwers: *O that I knew him, O that I knew where I might find him*, to be better *acquainted* with him; is this thy Caſe? Go order thy cauſe before Him, *and fill thy mouth with Arguments.*

Unacquaintedneſs with God.

Druſius.

First, Aſk him (with an humble and holy

Arguments

holy boldneſs) if he be not *willing* to be known? though he cover himſelf with Darkneſs, (but he is too Big and too Bright for a Covering) though *He make darkneſs his Pavilion round about him:* And if ſo; then,

Secondly, Why hath he made Intellectual Beings capable of knowing him; and eternaly miſerable if they know him not! thy Soul is ſo for certain.

Joh. 17. 3.

Thirdly, Why hath he ſo many ways iſſued forth and made out Himſelf? why hath he written ſuch admirable Comments in the things which are ſeen, *upon the inviſible things of God? His Eternal Power and God-head!*

Rom. 1. 20.

Why hath he ſparkled forth ſuch glorious Diſcoveries in the ſacred Scriptures, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt! in the births and breathings, the hints and whiſpers of his Spirit; in the wayes and workings of his Providence, in the experience of all his Saints, yea in thine own heart, mind and Soul, dark and doleſome though it be for the moſt part, ſo that thou canſt not order thy ſpeech by Reaſon of Darkneſs!

Fourthly, Why hath he ſo often laid his Commands upon poor ſinners to *ſeek* him, if he mean not to be found? ſhew him his own hand for it; thus

ſaith

ſaith the Lord to the houſe of *Iſrael*, *Seek ye me and ye ſhall live*, Amos 5. 4. *Seek the Lord, and ye ſhall live*, ver. 6. and yet again, verſe 8. *Seek him that maketh the ſeven ſtars and* Orion, *and turneth the ſhaddow of Death into the morning*: What meaneth all this earneſtneſs, if he mean not to be found? or ſaith he theſe things to *Iſrael* only, to *Iſrael* after the fleſh, and ſaith he not the ſame to all Nations? Nay is not this the very end why he giveth to all Life and Breath, and all things *That they ſhould ſeek the Lord, if happily they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us*: *Act.* 17. 27. and he never ſaid to the ſeed of *Jacob* (who wreſtle with him) *ſeek ye me in vain*, *Iſa.* 45. 19. And thou hopeſt thou art one of them, though the weakeſt of all thoſe ſpiritual Wreſtlers.

Nay ſhew him his *Warrant* directed to thoſe *who have plowed wickedneſs, and reaped Iniquity, and eaten the fruit of lyes*, Hoſ. 10. 12, 13. Why then ſhouldſt thou be excluded?

Fifthly, Aſk him if he have not been found of many a ſoul that ſought him not? Did not he prevent them and offer himſelf, and ſay, *Behold me, Behold*

hold me! Isa. 65. 1. Is there a ſoul with him now in Heaven, whoſe Name is not ſought out? *Isa.* 62. 12. And will he now hide himſelf from one that ſeeks him?

Sixthly, Aſk him whence is it, that thou haſt an *heart* now to ſeek him; Is it not becauſe he hath found thee, and means to be found of thee? *Jer.* 29. 12, 13, 14, *&c.* and he knows that thy whole heart is, or would fain be engaged in this work.

Seventhly, Why doth he allow ſo long a *time* to ſeek him in? all the time of this life as ſome think; at leaſt till the Decree bring forth, till he ſwear in his wrath, till the heart be judicially hardned, which yet is not thy caſe (through infinite Mercy) thou art not yet free amongſt the dead, nor bound among the damned.

Zeph. 2. 1, 2.

Eightly, Tell him (if thou canſt ſay ſo truely) that it is in order to practice that thou wouldſt be acquainted with him, not meerly to gratifie a natural itch after knowledge; not meerly that thou might'ſt talk of him; but walk with him, and love him, and fear him, and obey him in all things; and even in natural things; *Manus eſt cauſa ſcientiæ*, the hand contributes more to knowledge

Anaxagoras

knowledge than the *Brain*: thoſe things we learn to do, we learn by doing them; and as to Spirituals, Chriſt hath paſt his word for it, *John* 7. 17. *If any man will do his Will, he ſhall know of the Doctrine.*

Ninthly, Laſtly, Tell him 'tis not in a pang, in a fit, in an humour of new-fangledneſs, that thou art thus covetous, thus ambitious of his acquaintance: but (though late, though too, too late thou beganneſt this Enquiry) he knows thou haſt been of this mind for many a day. Thou haſt (though weakly) *followed on to know him*, and now thou expecteſt that good word of his ſhould be made good unto thy ſoul, Hoſ. 6. 2. *Then ſhall we know if we follow on to know the Lord; his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he ſhall come unto us as the rain, as the later and former rain unto the earth*: preſs theſe things upon him, and his Love and Truth will let him *hide* no longer.

CASE II.

Unworthineſs ever to be acquainted with God.

SEcondly, Doth the ſence of thy more than ordinary *unworthineſs* oppreſs thee? Doth the horridneſs and hainouſneſs of thy ſins lie as a Mountain of Lead *Unworthineſs to be aquainted with God.*

Lead upon thy Soul, and ſtifle all the movings and mountings of thy Spirit upward? Doth this nip all the buddings and bloomings of Faith and Hope, and force thee often to ſigh out in ſecret, It is impoſſible for me to be ſaved, I ſhall certainly at laſt prove a Reprobate! Is this thy caſe? Go order thy cauſe before him, and fill thy mouth with Arguments.

Arg. Firſt, In all Humility aſk him if he did not (before the foundations of the World were laid) chuſe voluntarly, abſolutely and immutably, what company he would have with him to all Eternity: ſometimes thou thinkeſt he would never chuſe thee; there now lies a ſecret Bar in thy way; ſtudy the point a little, and get it removed.

Eph. 1. 4. 2. Tim. 1. 9.

He was under no neceſſity to chuſe any; no not Chriſt himſelf to be the head of the Church, for he might have choſen whether ever there ſhould have been ſuch a body yea or no: God the Father begets the Son neceſſarily, not arbitrarly; that is, from his *Nature*, not from his *good pleaſure*; but he chooſeth him to be the head and root, and Repreſentative of the Church, arbitrarily, not neceſſarily; this is from his *good pleaſure*; not from his *Nature*;

Col. 1. 19.

How

How free is he then in all his other Elections?

He chose indeed in Christ, but not for Christ; as in the natural Birth, so here first the head comes forth, and then the Members; Christ is the cause of the Salvation of the Elect, but not of Election to Salvation. Christ is the meritorious cause of the application of all good, not of Gods volition or decreeing that good; Election is God himself electing: and there can be no cause of God; God cannot be an effect: Christ indeed was by, but had not the naming of the Elect; this was the Fathers part, and gives him primitively and Originally an interest in them as Christ himself acknowledgeth, *John* 17. 6. *Thine they were, and thou gavest them unto me.* Christ himself did not propound or solicite for this or that person; much less any forseen qualifications, which are the effects, but could not be the causes of that *Love* or *Choice*; and if there was none by to move him, was there any to *manacle* him, to prescribe Laws and limits to him? To say unto him, You may not chuse such or such a scarlet sinner: to set bounds and banks to those great deeps of electing Love, and to say unto them, Hither-

See Mr. *Norton's Orthodox Evangel.* Pag. 225, &c.

to

to may ye go, and on further, and here muſt your precious waves be ſtayed?

He choſe indeed not immediatly to Salvation, (that was too great a ſtride at once) but *to Sanctification of the Spirit unto Obedience*, 2. *Theſſ.* 2. 13. 1. *Pet.* 1. 2. Not becauſe he forſaw ſome would be holy, but that they might be ſo, *Eph.* 1. 4. The great *plot* was how to conform ſinfull, wofull Creatures to the Image of his Son, *Rom.* 8. 29. and this thy Soul likes paſſing well; Go then and put him to it: aſk him if he will own this Doctrine, and ſeal it upon thy heart: (it matters not how many men diſown it) and tell him thou canſt not by any thing thou diſcerneſt therein conclude thy ſelf to be excluded, though thou yieldeſt thy ſelf to be the chiefeſt of ſinners, and that thy caſe is *reſerved* only for his cogniſance; for thou canſt not fully utter it to any creature living.

Secondly, tell him in condemning he glorifies but one or two of his Attributes, Juſtice and Soveraignity; but in ſaving he will magnifie them all.

Thirdly, Mind him how often he hath already ſacrificed to his Juſtice, by puniſhing ſuch offenders as thou haſt been; Hell is full of Inſtances, full of

thoſe

those Sacrifices: and yet the sufferings of his Son do more set off the Glory of his Holiness than them all, than all the Everlasting Torments of the Damned.

Fourthly, Ask him if Heaven will not afford plenty of *Precedents* for the like mercy thou now needest and beggest of him: Ask if *Manasses* and *Mary Magdalene*, and many such like be not there with Him.

Fifthly, If He never met the like since the beginning of his Creation (for so sometimes thou thinkest) ask him if he mean to let slip such an *Opportunity* to set forth the Greatness and Transcendency of his Grace and Mercy in all its Pomp and Power, Oriency and Lustre; and fill thy Heart and Mouth with this Argument: 'Tis like *Goliah*'s Sword to *David*, *There is none like it*: See how *David* himself Weilds it, *Psal.* 25. 11. *For thy names sake O Lord pardon mine iniquity, for it is great*; if this be a good Argument, thou dost not want one; it seems *David* thought so, and so did *Moses*, Exod. 32. 31. *Oh this people have sinned a great sin! but here's work now for the Greatness of Gods Power in pardoning*, which in those cases he flies to, *Num.* 14. 17. *and now I beseech thee let the Power of my Lord be great*

according as thou haſt Spoken.

Dr. *Thom. Goodwin's Chriſt the univerſal Peace-maker.* pag. 15.

God to honour his Son in reconciling us to himſelf, permits the greateſt ſins and enmities to be in the hearts and lives of thoſe he intends to ſave, (ſaith a precious ſervant of his) and thou mayeſt well hope God will not be wanting to the Glory of his own Grace and of his Sons Merits; for the illuſtrating and manifeſting whereof, the pardoning of ſo great and grievous ſins will ſerve aboundantly; ſuch an over-grown ſinner doth *Anſam præbere*, give him a fair occaſion, and he will not looſe it. *Cranmer* a little before his going to the ſtake, relieves his ſorrowfull Spirit after his ſinfull Recantation with this conſideration: *Magnum illud myſterium*, &c. Surely that great Myſtery of God's Incarnation was never contrived for the pardon only of leſſer offences; 'Tis the Top of all thy Saviours Glory, that *He is able to Save to the utmoſt them that come unto God by Him*, Heb. 7. 25.

Nay, If upon ſtrong grounds thou concludeſt thy ſelf (all things conſidered) *A non ſuch*: Aſk him how he will come off from that Obligation, of *drawing all men* (that is, ſome of all ſorts) *unto himſelf*, Joh. 12. 32. If thine Iron heart feel not the attractive power and vertue

vertue of this Load-stone, there will be never a sinner of thy sort, size and kind to adorn his triumph at the day of his appearing! Those Sanguine sinners against the Holy Ghost (the only rank and file of sinners excluded, *Matth*, 12 ult.) have no mind to plead as thou hast, and thou art none of their number.

Sixthly, Tell him he shall be more *admired* and loved for such a Miracle of Matchless Mercy, than for all his curious Works of Creation or dreadfull Acts of Vengeance.

Seventhly, Tell him it must be no small matter, no easie, no ordinary thing that must beget *Eternal* Trances, and Extasies, and Admirations; the greatest wonders of this world, last but a little while, those of the next must last for ever; and the pardoning, and purifying, the Sanctifying and Saving of such a Sinner will Eternally yield Oyl to such a flame.

Eightly, Tell him no Soul in Heaven shall *admire* or love him *more* than thou (though now thou comest in the Rear of all his Adorers) and thou mayest venture to say so, if that of Christ be true (as certainly it is) *Luke* 7. 47 *that he to whom much is forgiven, will love much.*

Ninthly, Lastly, Tell him that the

wonder ſhall not be *confined* to thy perſon, but run through Heaven and affect all men, and Angels, and that (in all likelihood) many ſhall wonder more for his Grace to thee than to themſelves, who never ſin'd up to the hight, nor after the ſimilitude of thy tranſgreſſions: eſpecially Angels that never ſin'd, and ſuch as died in Infancy, or lived in Innocency in compariſon of thee; how ſhould they know the extent of Grace, were it not for ſuch ſuperlative ſinners? and that is one of his great Deſigns to be admired, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 10. and he knows that in thee he cannot miſs of it.

The end of Philoſophy is ſaid to be to admire nothing; but the end and ſcope of Divinity, is to make us admire God in every thing; in this thing eſpecially, the Eternal Salvation of the greateſt Sinners.

CASE III.

Jealouſie as to Chriſt.

Jealouſie as to Chriſt.

THIRDLY, Haſt thou any ſecret Fears that this Lord Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt heard and talked (it may be) ſo often of, takes no notice of thee, has no mind to do any thing for thee;

thee; is this, (it may be when thou art most retired into thy self, and most serious) thy case and thy condition? Go order thy cause before him, and fill thy *Mouth* with Arguments; Remember thy distance, and then,

Arguments

First, Ask him what made him take so great a Journey? what brought him down from Heaven to Earth? was it not to seek and to save such lost straying creatures as thou art, who all fall to the Lord of the Soyl? if thou art not, hast not been lost every way, even in thine own sence and apprehension, let him skip over thee and leave thee out.

Mat. 11. 28. 1. Joh 3. 23. John 3. ult.

Secondly, Ask him why doth he invite all weary burdened poor souls to come unto him; why doth he command them to cast themselves upon him, threaten those that do not, with the utmost peril and punishment, if he be not willing to bid those that come welcome? the great quarrel between Him and sinners is this, *ye will not come unto me that ye might have life.* John 5. *v.* 40.

Thirdly, Tell him thou verily believest he never yet cast out any one soul that came unto him, according to that Blessed Word of his, *Joh.* 6. 37. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me, and him that cometh to me, I will*

will in no wise cast out: (A Text that hath been a Sanctuary to many a troubled soul) Ask him now if he mean to begin with thee, if thou shalt be the first that ever was refused by him?

Fourthly, Tell him he knows all things, he knows that thou dost not come unto him for *fashion-sake*, because 'tis the custom, and they are in no request with whom Christ is in none, at least in pretence and semblance.

Fifthly, He knows thou dost not follow him for *loaves*, for outward advantage and accommodations, because preferment waits upon profession.

Sixthly, Tell him 'tis true indeed, 'its *necessity* inforceth thee to come unto him because otherwise thou art lost and ruin'd to all Eternity; and yet he knows what a value thy soul has for him, that thou lookest on an interest in him as thy great concernment; the one thing needfull, the more excellent way; that all thy treasures, pleasures, honours, yea, thy very Relations (which are as so many parts & pieces of thy self) are as if they were not, in comparison to him; are to thee (as all Nations are to him) as a *drop of the Bucket*, neither here nor there, if in *competition* or *comparison* with *Him*.

Phil. 3. 9.

Seventhly, Lastly, Thou canst say to him

him, that though 'tis out of Neceſſity, 'tis out of *choice* too that thou comeſt to him; were it poſſible for thee to be ſaved any other way, thou wouldſt chuſe this rather; there was a time indeed when thy heart gauded about ſtrangely ſo oft to change thy way; thou wouldſt have gone to any door for relief rather than his; but ſince thou haſt had ſome little glances and glimmerings of Him, though but in a tranſient way, though but in a Glaſs, or at a Window, or throw the *Latice*, ſince thou haſt taſted ſome ſmall drops of his ſweetneſs, he knows thy heart is ſo taken therewith, yea with that Glorious and moſt Gracious *contrivance* of His undertaking for thee (the Wicked being delivered, and the Righteous coming in his ſtead) yea with the love and lovely *perſon* of a Saviour, that theſe are now become more with thee, than Salvation it ſelf, if that were only deliverance from wrath to come; canſt thou plead thus? Surely, a full Reward ſhall be given thee of the Lord God of *Iſrael*, under whoſe wings thou art come to truſt, though thou art but a ſtranger, and thy Soul in her own eyes not *like to one of his handmaidens*, Ruth 2. 10, 12, 13, to allude thereunto.

1 Cor. 15. 12. Cant. 2. 9.

CASE

CASE IV.

Jealousie concerning God the Father.

Jealousie concerning God the Father.

BUT it may be thou art pretty well satisfied concerning the freeness and forwardness of Christ to help thee, He hath done and Suffered enough in all conscience to convince thee: and thou hast very soft and sweet thoughts of him, but terrible ones concerning the *Father*, thou lookest upon him as an Angry God, an incensed Judge, an enraged Enemy, with his Hand alwayes up and ready to strike, but that Christ steps in and wards the blow; or at least thou suspectest him to be no such hearty friend to thee as Christ is: that the whole Treaty of Peace tendered to thee by him through his Son is but an Ambushment laid to catch thee, and to conclude thee under the greater condemnation, because the Father stands much out of play, and thou knowest not what to think of him; is this thy sad case now and then upon misgivings and tremblings of thy Heart about the great business of Eternity? Go order thy cause before *him* and fill thy *mouth with Arguments.*

Vid. Dr. *Goodwin*, Encouragements to Faith, p. 7. &c.

Arguments First, Ask him if that sweet Son of his (whom the World once was so happy

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py as to see, though so unhappy as not to know him) if he be not just *such another* for all the World as himself; *the brightness of his Glory and the express Image of his person*, Heb. 1. 3.

And sure Christ the sinners friend (as some sinners censured him) was affable enough, kind enough, compassionat enough, shewed love enough to poor sinners, in his carriage and Conversation: in his abasements and condescentions, in his Life, in his Death; if not, where and who is he that will come and shew more? Why, but saith Christ, my Father is just such another as I am to an hairs breadth: his heart as full of love and tenderness as mine every whit: know one, know both, John 10. 30. *I and my Father are one:* and John 12. 44, 45. *Jesus cryed and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on Him that sent Me; and he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.* And John 14. 19. *Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me* Philip? *He that hath seen me hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou then shew us the Father? and I came out of his bosome on purpose to* * *declare him*, John 1. 18. To be his *Exegesis*, (that's

See Dr. *Jackson*, 11. Book, Chap. 28. *pag.* 337. &c. He that cannot look upon the *Sun* in its strength at Noon day, may take the model of it in the water, or in the Moon at full: so we that cannot behold the glory of Divine Majesty in the *God-head* or in *God* the Father only, may safely behold the Map or Model of his incomprehensible goodness

in *the man* Christ Jesus.

the word) to expound him as a clear *Comment* tells us what's in a dark text, and if this be confirmed to thee by the Father, if he will own it, as certainly he will thou art well enough; but thou mayest go further and ask him,

* ἐξηγήσατο *Expositit*, Bez.

Secondly, If he had not the first hand in the whole Design of Love and Life to poor sinners, (for there is a priority of Order, and Origination, though not of time) And to believe this, there are grounds sufficient to induce thee: for,

Isa. 40. 14. Heb. 6.17. Eph 1.11. Isa 25. 1. & 10. 46. Prov. 19. 21.

First, Was it not He who first *summoned* that great Council held by all the Persons in *Elohim*, when neither Man nor Angel existed, nor had been worthy to have been admitted there, if they had then existed; there he sat in consultation with his Wisdom and Love, his Word and Spirit, *de arduis Regni, de arcanis Imperii*; and especially about Man's Salvation, and can that blessed womb miscarry with any of its conceptions? Surely no.

Secondly, Was it not He who first pitched upon the *Son*, and laid him as the *foundation* to the whole Fabrick; one able to bear up the weight of all the work; though thy Load alone be enough to crack the Axeltree of Hea-

1 Pet. 1. 20. Isa. 28 16. John 10. 36.

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ven and Earth: to break the back of the whole Creation, to bear down any other foundation before it into Hell: yet here's help laid upon one that is *mighty*, mighty to save? And if the Angels shouted for Joy to see the corner stone of the earth laid, *Job* 38. 7. shall not the Saints with delight see the corner Stone of their Salvation laid by the hand of the Father? and ask if this be nothing unto thee; if thou art to have no place in this building? however bless him for laying such a *foundation.* Psal 89. 19. Isa. 63. 1.

Thirdly, Was it not he who then took particular cognizance of things and persons, which is called in Scripture God's *foreknowledge*, *Rom.* 8. 29. and 11. 1, 2, *&c.* Enough to overwhelm a poor sinner when he comes to get an inkling of it, that he was then minded; what, mee Lord? Didst thou then think of mee, and dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one? *Job.* 14. 3.

Fourthly, Was it not He who then picked and *chose* out of Angels and men, whom he would have confirmed amongst the Angels, called therefore the *Elect Angels*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 21. and though they were never out of favour, yet they are said to be *reconciled*, Col. 1. 20. Confirmation being that to them, which Reconcili- The Messiah and the Righteous are amongst those seven things which the Jews say, were be-

fore this World was created: that is, as *Mercer* expounds them, *quæ in mente divinâ essent ab æterno. Mer on Ven.* 1.

Reconciliation is to us; and they had it by renouncing their ſtanding upon their own ſingle bottom, and running under the wing of Chriſt; accepting and owning him as their Head, *Col.* 2. 10. God would not keep an Angel in Heaven, that would not be beholding to his Son for it: And amongſt men he choſe whom he would have recovered, *Rom.* 9. 11, 13. Aſk how thou mayeſt make thy *Calling* and *Election* ſure; and never turn this Grace into *wantonneſs*: for to abuſe this Doctrine is one of the blackeſt badges and ſaddeſt ſigns of *Reprobation*, *Jude*, verſe 4.

Fifthly, Was it not He who ratified his choice by a ſolemn *Decree*, called the *Purpoſe of God according to Election*, Rom. 9. 11. The Myſtery of his *Will according to the good pleaſure, which he had purpoſed in himſelf*, Epheſ. 1. 9. *The Eternal purpoſe which he purpoſed in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord*, Eph. 3. 11. And yet there's no unrighteouſneſs with God (which *Paul* foreſaw ſome would charge him with,) *Rom.* 9. 14. No cruelty, no Diſſimulation, no Tyranny; and if the Lord hath purpoſed who *ſhall diſſaml it? Iſa.* 14. 24, 27.

Sixthly, Was it not He who called for the *Books*, and cauſed all the Reſolves

solves to be entered, *Heb.* 10. 5. even *to the very names written in the Lamb's Book of Life*, Rev. 13. 8. and 21. 27. with the *Golden* Letters of Love, with indelible Characters in his blood; (we read of no black Book of Death, and therefore I meddle not with it) but hadst thou ever any help to read thy name written in Heaven, this is matter of more joy than if thou could'st cast out Devils, and work wonders, *Luke* 10. 20. if not yet, all in good time, go to the Father and he will help thee to spell thy name there by his Spirit of Adoption, who was, and is a Member of this Council, and well acquainted with all that passed there. Act. 15.

Seventhly, Was it not He who then *ordered* all other things in a way of subordination and subserviency to the Sanctification and Salvation of the Elect; Good works then received his Seal, *Ephes.* 2. 10. Evil ones (by a just Analogy) a Brand, He then drew up *the Ordinances of Heaven*: passed a *Decree* for the *Sea*, and for the *Rain*, and for the opening of the *Eye-lids* of the *Morning*; *to cause the Day-spring to know its place, and the Sun his going down*, unless forbidden, as in the days of *Joshua*. He then appointed natural Agents 18. & 17. 26. Jer. 33. 25. Job 28. 26. and 38. 10, &c. Psal. 119. 91.

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to act neceſſarily; the Sun to ſhine, the Fire to burn, the Sea to run in its courſe: yet he ſet them not a going with ſuch an irreſiſtible ſwing, but that he can ſtop them at his pleaſure.

Free Agents to act freely, the Will of man to be alwayes free in all its acts, if not *Quoad ſpecificationem*, to do good or evil at his pleaſure, yet *quoad exercitium*, he need never do evil, unleſs he pleaſeth: ſo that he is left without excuſe.

And all other things were ordered as *Scaffolds* to this building; now who but a mad man would lay his bed on the ſcaffold & ſay, that's accommodation good enough; and ſo take up with that, no matter for the Building; beg that he would never leave thee to that madneſs, but lead thee to things Spiritual and Eternal, by all externals, and that all things may work together for thygood, according to this ancient apointment.

We give this Reaſon for it, becauſe the Father was directly offended, by ſins marring his work of Cre-

Eightly, Was it not by an Agreement between his Son and him, that he ſhould ſit as *Creditor* in Heaven and the Son come down to be reſponſible to Juſtice? otherwiſe there was love enough in his heart, to have let the Son ſit Creditor in Heaven, and to have come down himſelf as *Debitor* and dyed for thee: and therefore ſaith Chriſt, though

I ſhould not pray for you, *the Father himſelf loveth you*, John 16. 27. Nay he loves you ſo well that he doth *therefore love me, becauſe I lay down my life for you*, John 10. 17. what a ſtrange expreſſion of love is this?

ation, & other-reaſons are given for the Son's incarnation *Hiſmelius Diſput.* 12, *Theſ.* 14. *P.* 130.

Ninthly, Did not He draw up all the Son's Articles and Inſtructions, as

1. That he muſt begin his work in deepeſt humiliation and abaſement.

2. That he muſt pawn his Glory to go through-ſtich with it, which he Redeems, and Re-demands upon his performance, *John* 17. 4, 5.

3. That he muſt run the Gauntlop in that *Nature* he would Redeem, and be content that every one ſhould have a fling at him, 'tis *Hillaries* alluſion, *naturæ noſtræ contumelias tranſcurrit.*

4. That his God-head muſt be eclipſed and vail'd, and he made like unto his Brethren in their natural neceſſities, ſinleſs infirmities, live by faith, get every thing by prayer: not do his own will, but his that ſent him, and ſo fulfill all Righteouſneſs; and why was he thus conformed unto us, but that we might be made conformable unto him?

5. That he muſt in the days of his fleſh orally and perſonally declare his Fathers Name and love unto his Brethren

Bretheren: and afterwards Depute and Subſtitute ſome to do it to the end of the world; and ſo long as his Leiger Embaſſadors reſide in any place uncalled home, not ſent for away: the Treaty of Peace holds and continues, and their work is not only to declare Chriſt, but the Father alſo: and this was the ſweeteſt promiſe that Chriſt could chear up his Diſciples with, *John* 16. 25. *The time cometh when I ſhall no more ſpeak unto you in Proverbs, but I ſhall ſhew you plainly of the Father:* and that's a moſt ſweet and ſatisfying Object, *John* 14. 8. *Lord ſhew us the Father and it ſufficeth* us.

Act. 2. 23. & 4. 20. Heb. 9. 8. 6. That He muſt Dye a Bloody, painfull, ſhamefull, accurſed death to pay the Debts of his people, and then riſe again from the dead, and bring up his blood with him into the Holieſt of Holies, and there exerciſe and execute the office of his everlaſting Prieſthood; if he would have his death which was of infinite value in it ſelf to be of infinite Vertue and efficacy unto others; and is not all this performed exactly, and hath he not herein commended his love unto us with a witneſs. *Rom.* 5. 8, *&c.*

7. That whatever was given him, he muſt

muſt preſently give of the ſame to his Members, to fit them for that Glorious Fellowſhip, whereunto they are ordained; what he *Receives* with one hand he muſt *give* with the other; and we ſee what *David* calls *Receiving*, *Pſalm.* 68. 18. *Paul* calls *Giving*, *Eph.* 4. 12. as if theſe were one and the ſame thing with Chriſt, and thou deſireſt no more of Chriſt then what the Father hath ordered out by him. Act. 2. 23. & 5.

8. After the Father (whoſe motion and project this was) had wrought of the Son to undertake it, did not he then engage to ſtand by him & to ſupply him with all neceſſaries: a *Body* to ſuffer in, and a *Spirit* to that Body without *Meaſure*, and to *bring* thoſe in to him in Time by Retail, whom he had given to him in the Lump, before Time was, he doth more than *Invite* (as ſaith *Arminius*) he doth effectually *draw* by an Omnipotent ſweetnes; and Chriſt muſt not ſcruple to entertain the moſt Leprous Loathſome ſinner whom the Father is pleaſed to bring unto him; Ay, and the Father muſt help to *Keep* them alſo, whom he hath brought in, *Joh.* 10. 28, 29. (a Precious Cordial in Apoſtatizing times,) and all this being done according to an antient complot Iſa. 42. 6. & 50. 9. Heb. 10. Joh. 3. 34. & 7. 37, 44. 5. 17. 8. 29. Jer. 31. 3.

and *Aggrement*; *Socinus* cannot from these supplies or dependencies infer the Son's *Inferiority* to the Father; and the Poor believing sinner may press him with all these *Engagements.*

9. Over and above all this, Did he not put forth his paternal Authority, and lay his *Commands* upon his Son, to engage in this great service, *John*, 10. 18. and 12. 9, 20. as *Pharoah* to express a Pleonasm of Love, commands *Joseph* to be kind to his Neareſt and Dearest Relations; which one would think, little needed, *Gen*, 45. 19. Go look God in the face, and say as *David* doth, *Psal* 71. 2. *Thou hast given Commandment to save me*; And to whom? To Men or Angels? No: to me, says Christ: *This Commandment have I received of my Father.* If Christ fail, there is not only breach of Articles, but *Disobedience* too. Thou can'st not believe that Christ loves thee so well, as to lay down his Life for thee: But can'st thou believe he loves the Father? that's easie, there's no doubt of that: Why (says Christ, when he was going to Die) *That the World may know how I Love the Father as the Father hath given me Commandment, even so do I*, John 14. 31.

Psal. 110. 2. 10. Yet again to make all sure, least the

the Humane Nature of Christ upon its assumption, should shrink at the approach of Sufferings: Doth not the Father engage to *Reward* him plentifully, to give him a Royal and an Everlasting Priesthood, a name above every Name, appoints unto him a Kingdom, *Luke* 22. 29. and above all, assures him of the Salvation of those he died for, according to this Agreement, *Isa.* 53. 11. without which nothing could ever have satisfied him, So that as the Assumption of the Humane Nature is the highest instance of *Free Mercy*; so is the *Rewarding* thereof in its state of exaltation, the the highest instance of *Remunerative* Justice. Phil. 2. 8, &c. Heb. 12. 2.

All this needed not to engage Christ to work, so much as to engage us to believe that the Father was first in *Willing*, as he is in *Subsisting*, the Son second to him therein; but not in Heartiness of Good Will, For therein they are both equal: They must needs be One in *Will*, who are so in *Nature* & *Being*; but still the Father is first in *Love*, Joh. 3. 16. *For God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have Everlasting Life.* And 1. Joh. 4. 9, 10. *In this was manifested the love*

of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might Live through Him. Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our sins. And therefore Love is laid at his door by the Apostle, 2. *Cor.* 13. 14. *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.* The *Grace of Christ* makes way for our enjoying *the Love of God*; but we had never known the *Grace of Christ*, had it not been first for the Love of God, who therefore is called Our Saviour, 1. *Tim.* 1. 1.

11. And as if all this were not enough; Did not the Father *Seal* His Son a Commission, To give life to lost sinners, *John* 6. 27. And therefore Christ so often mentions the Father as *sending* him, and furnishing him with Miracles, his *Letters Credential* where ever he came.

12. Nay more, If Suffering for Our sakes be a sign of Love, (as who can Deny or doubt it) to speak after the manner of men: Had not the *Father* His share of *Sufferings* as well as the *Son?* Was it nothing for him to part with his Son? such a Son, an only Son,

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the delight of his Heart and eyes, and that not amongſt friends, but enemies? Who would ſeek and ſuck his Blood in this ſence to *ſpare* him, and yet in another not to *ſpare* him, but to *bruiſe* him, and take *pleaſure* in ſo doing? Is all this nothing? He may ſeem indeed to have an eaſie part to ſit in Heaven and receive ſatisfaction: but you ſee it coſt him ſomething too, nay more; *He denies himſelf, and diſappears, and gives up the immediate management of all affairs into the hands of his Son*: That part the Son took was ſharper but ſhorter, laſted not much above three and thirty years, but from the time of Chriſts Reſurrection: 'Tis a long *ævum* before that God come again to be *all in all*, 1 *Cor.* 15, 24. and 28. and he in a manner remains hid till the day of Judgment, now Chriſt is *all in all*, Col. 3. 12. *The Son tranſacts all by the Spirit, till the laſt day, and the Father worketh now only in and through the Son*: Thus you ſee the Father veiling and eclipſing his Glory, to make it ſhine the more hereafter, and in the mean time his love that ſhines forth herein gloriouſly. Rom. 8. 32. Iſa. 53 10. Mat. 11. 27. & 28. 18.

13. Hath not the Father (as well as Chriſt) an hand in *ſending the Holy Ghoſt*, to make a diſcovery and Appli- Joh. 15. 26. & 15. 26.

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cation of all these things? yea he is called *the Promise of the Father*, which Christ had often hinted to his Disciples, as the best news he could bring them from Heaven, *Act.* 1. 4. *which (saith he) ye have heard of me.*

14. Lastly, Was it not he that wrapt up all this in a glorious *Covenant*, a Covenant of Grace, Life and Peace, of which I may say as *John* of the Commandment of Love, 1 *John* 2. 7, 8. 'Tis both the *New* and *Old* Covenant; the first and last, and everlasting Covenant, call'd a *Promise*, (lest the word *Covenant* should scare us, and make us think there's more required of us, by way of restipulation, then we can reach unto) *Tit.* 1. 2. 1. *Joh.* 2. 25. *Covenant of Promise Eph.* 2. 12. and while we are altogether, *strangers* thereunto we are without *Hope*. The other Covenant was contrived and given forth chiefly to make way and welcome for this, and 'tis this Covenant the precious things whereof are Sealed up unto us in the Sacraments: This is that secret of the Lord which is with them that fear him, *Psal.* 25. 13. to make them know the Covenant he is ever mindfull of it, and therefore sent Redemption unto his People: He hath commanded

Heb. 13. 20. *Sententiam sæpè mutat Deus. Concilium nunquam.* Greg.

commanded this Covenant for ever, *Holy and Reverend is his Name*, Pſal. 111. 5. 9, &c. and 'tis this will afford Death-bed Comfort, 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. Although my Houſe be not ſo with God, Yet he hath made with me an *everlaſting Covenant*, ordered in all things and ſure, for this is all my Salvation, and all my deſire, although He make it not to grow.

Now then though all theſe things are Phraſed in the Language of Men, yet not without warrant from the Holy Ghoſt, who condeſcends thus to liſp out the Miſteries of Salvation, elſe we could not underſtand, or take in any thing of them; and though they are all but *One Act* in God, as all his Attributes are but one Divine Excellency and Glory, the Divine Eſſence it ſelf: but this is too big to come in all at once into our narrow hearts, therefore God lets out Himſelf by degrees, by drops and beams as we may bear it; 'tis ſo in the diſcovery of himſelf, and 'tis ſo in the diſcovery of his Council, and Operations concerning us in Chriſt Jeſus.

And though the Operations *ad extra* are undevided, but (according to the ancient agreement between them) the Operation is attributed to that perſon; the

the manner of whose subsisting appears most in it, *beginning* work to the Father, *carrying* on to the Son, *finishing* to the Holy Ghost.

Yea though many disown and dislike these things, yet now go, and put them home to God: and if he will own them, and bear his witness to them, and seal them upon thy heart, it will be sufficient for thee, to shame thee for all thy hard thoughts of him, and to secure thee from the like tormenting fears for time to come, and (I know it) he will work wonders (if thy Spirit be stirred up to put him to it) rather then be wanting in his witness to so great a Truth as this, and so shalt thou be (as *Job* speaks) delivered for ever from thy Judge, from all frightfull Ideas and apprehensions of him, as an angry severe Judge and enabled to walk with him all thy days, as with a most indulgent and tender hearted *Father*.

CASE V.

Fear of Unbelief.

Fear of *Unbelief.*

BUT what is all this to me (may a poor Soul say,) though I assent unto it, and think I believe it, if my Faith prove a false blaze of Fancy, Presumption, vain Hope? and thou hast cause

cause to fear and suspect it, because it hath not the Vertue and Operation of that plant of Paradise, *The Faith of the Operation of God, the Faith of Gods Elect.* Is this thy *Case* many times? Go, order thy cause before him, and *fill thy mouth with Arguments*; Go, bow thy knees unto the God and Father of our Lord Jesus: And, Col. 2 12 Tit. 1. 1.

First, Tell him, he knows how thy heart is carried forth towards him, only according to the terms and tenour of a *Covenant of Grace*, and not of *Works*, thou can'st not by any means away with that, that he should deal and do by thee as thou dost by him; no thou canst not find the life of thine hand, as 'tis said of some, *Isa.* 57. 10. *thine hands are not sufficient for thee*, as 'tis said of *Judah*, *Deut.* 33. 7. And will he trample upon a worm that would fain creep towards him, only in that way which he himself hath chalked out and is so pleasing to him? *Arguments*

Secondly, he knows that the sole *ground* of thy confidence is the precious and plenteous Grace of the Glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ, which tells thee that Christ dyed for sinners, enemies, ungodly, impotent ones: and ask him, if he have ever a Soul with him in Rom. 5. 6, 8. Mat. 20. 28. & 26. 28. Mar. 10. 45.

in Glory that was not once ſuch an one? that many are ranſomed and pardoned by Chriſt; but not how many. Why may'ſt not thou be one of thoſe many?

That Salvation is neither of *him that willeth, nor of him that runneth: but of God that ſheweth mercy*, *Rom.* 9. 16. even to the priſoners of unbelief, *Rom.* 11. 32. theſe and a thouſand ſuch like precious things the Goſpel uttereth.

Aſk him now if thou muſt be aſhamed of the Goſpel, as thou haſt been of the Law, of thy looking for life by it? and if he will reject this confidence alſo, ſo that thou muſt not proſper in it.

Jer. 2. 36, 37.

Thirdly, Aſk him if there be not a double *reconciliation* plainly taught in the Doctrine of the Goſpel? the one actually purchaſed by the death of Jeſus Chriſt, and acknowledged by God at that time; the other at the converſion of a ſinner, when he lays down his arms and enmities, and the knowledge of the one is the means to the other: Hath God then *ſtirred up all his wrath* again, and will not ſuffer a poor ſoul to come near him, who would fain *receive the attonement*, and be made friends with him?

Rom. 5. 9: 10, 11: 2 Cor. 5: 18. *&c.*

Fourthly, Aſk him wherefore hath this Goſpel been brought to thine ears.

to

to thine heart; but that thou ſhouldeſt muſt in it, and that perfectly, (τελείως) even to the end, 1 *Pet.* 1. 13. Did he not call thee to *Repentance*, and will he now repent of his Calling, that can not be, for his gifts and calling are without Repentance, *Rom.* 11. 29.

Did he not bid thee come unto him upon thoſe waters of the Sanctuary; And muſt thou now ſink and periſh, to allude to that of *Peter*, *Math.* 14. 30.

Fifthly, Tell him he knows how fully, how thankfully thy ſoul *ſubmits* to that *Righteouſneſs* which is revealed and offered in the Goſpel: and none periſh in unbelief, but they who are *ignorant* thereof, or *ſubmit* not thereunto; *Rom.* 10. 3. Once indeed thou wert proud of thine own poor polluted Rags, but haſt now caſt them all away, and ſaid unto them with deteſtation, get ye hence; and wilt never gather them together again, but Bleſſeſt him with all thy heart and Soul, for that better proviſion made in the Goſpel, and wouldſt fain appear daily, continually before him, cloathed with that Righteouſneſs which Chriſt came on purpoſe to bring into the World, *Dan.* 9. 24. Phil. 3. 8, 9. 2. Pet. 1. 1. ἰσότιμον πίστιν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Sixthly, He knows thy heart cloſeth with Chriſt for *ſanctification* as well as Righteouſneſs

1. *Cor* 30. 1. Righteouſneſs to juſtifie thy Faith, as that muſt juſtifie thy perſon, it cloſeth with the whole Goſpel, with whole Chriſt in all his Offices; and that there is nothing more deſireable to thine eye then that Holineſs which the Goſpel requireth, Promiſeth and Promoteth. How fain would thy Soul be his Glaſs, wherein he might View all his own Glories, Vertues, Beauties, Graces, by reflection: And will he break this glaſs in pieces?

1. Pet. 2. 9. Seventhly and laſtly, Aſk him if he will but ſtand to that one good word, τὰς ἀρετὰς ſpoken in his name to his ſervant, *Rom.* 5. 20. *Where ſin abounded, Grace did much more abound*; this is not the ſpawn or ſpume of thy fancy, nor haſt thou met with this ſaying in ſome good book, whoſe Author might be miſtaken; but if God will make it good (as thou thinkeſt him bound to do, even for the Glory of his Grace, Wiſdom and Truth) thou can'ſt tell where there are Jam. 1. 21. *ſuperfluities of naughtineſs*, and He can tell where there are Super-aboundings, overflowings of Grace and Mercy; and if he will draw up the ſluces, thou ſhalt not only Honour him by believeing, but be encouraged to look for more than ordinary Favours from him, even

becauſe

because ſin hath ſo abounded: And is not this the Faith that ſhould come? or muſt thou look for another? or if this be it, why then is not thy heart purified, heart and life ſanctified by it? why is it not unto his ſervant according to his word? *Act.* 15. 9. and 26. 18. Plead and preſs this hard upon him, and (my Soul for thine) he will not deny thee, he will not ſay thee nay: you may take not mine but the Apoſtle *Peter's* word for it, that this is *the true Grace of God wherein ye ſtand*, 1. Pet. 5. 12.

CASE VI.

Fear of Hypocriſie.

BUT there is a damp upon thy Spirit, a great diſcouragement which takes off thy boldneſs before him: ſo thou feareſt that though thou doſt (as thou thinkeſt) believe and rejoyce for a ſeaſon in the Grace believed, yet 'tis not likely *to laſt alwayes*, thou ſhalt not be able to hold the rejoycing of thy confidence firm unto the end, thou ſhalt prove but a temporary; a dunghill covered with ſnow, which will melt away; thou findeſt ſo much *Hypocriſie* in whatever thou goeſt about, thou haſt done much evil without the mixture Fear of Hypocriſie

mixture of any nood, but never any good without the mixture of much evil, and the Hypocrite is justly hated of God and man; the world hates him because he seems good, and God abhors him because he only seems, and is not truly such: and this sometimes thou feareſt will be thy Portion, and can'ſt not diſcover the bottom of thy miſery to any fleſh living, and this ere long will put an end to thy pleading; thou feareſt that both the Gift, and Grace, and ſpirit of Prayer (if ever thou hadſt it) will leave thee, according to that in *Job* 27. 8, 9, 10. *For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his ſoul, will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him, will he delight himſelf in the Almighty: will he alwayes call upon God?* Well, Go to God in this caſe however, Go order thy cauſe before him and fill thy mouth with *Arguments.*

Arguments

1. Tell him He, and He alone knows whether thou aymeſt not at *entireneſs* of heart before him, both as to the *ſubject*, the whole heart which thou wouldſt have kept even from *thine iniquity*, and as to the *Object*, all his Commandments; thou knoweſt not one of them, which thy ſpirit baulks or boggles at, but

Pſalm 18 23. Pſalm 119. 6. & ver. 140.

but the more *pure* his word is, the more thy ſoul *loveth it*.

And alſo as to the *means* of Grace, they are all dear and precious to thee, and thou wouldſt be found in the uſe of all his appointments, bid him name that thing which he requires, and which thou knowingly and purpoſely declineſt: And is this the guiſe or way of an Hypocrite? only be ſure thy heart reproach thee not.

Secondly, He knows what is the ſecret *end* of thy living, and why thou art *deſirous* or ſo much as *content* to continue in this World, not to ſhare in the Pleaſures or Profites or Honours thereof, (the worlds Trinity which it adores and ſerves, and ſacrificeth it ſelf unto) but to be receiving or doing ſome good in thy ſtation and generation; and can it be thus with an Hypocrite? 1 Joh. 2. 16. Theſe three are the worlds all.

Thirdly, He knows that thou *chuſeſt* rather to be ſickly or poor, or diſgraced, and to walk cloſe with him, then in Health, Wealth, or Honour to wander from him, or to ly out at a great diſtance from Communion with him, yea rather to be following hard after Him, though thou ſhouldſt never *enjoy* his Glorious, Raviſhing, Tranſporting-preſence, while thou liveſt, than

than to ſwim in aboundance of carnal enjoyments, and to have a heart careleſs of him, eſtranged from him: and is it thus with any Hypocrite in the World?

Fourthly, Tell him thou hadſt rather he ſhould *know* all thy *ſecret* ſinnings againſt him, then that he ſhould not know all thy ſecret ſighings and Lamentations after him, the world hath ſeen and ſtumbled at many of thy miſcarriages, but hath not ſeen nor recovered by thy ſecret mournings; but *he ſeeth in ſecret:* and therefore tell him,

Mat. 6. 6.

Fifthly, It will not be for his Honour to reject thee, for *all muſt out*: all thy ſecret ſobbings and pantings and purſuings after him, muſt be known one day: and what would Angels and men think to ſee ſuch a mourner in ſecret caſt off to all eternity?

Laſtly, Appeal unto him, He knows thou haſt been uſually as earneſt with him for *Holineſs* in time of *proſperity*, as in time of ſtraits and adverſity: and is this the manner of Hypocrites? Surely no; *Uzziah* was *marvelouſly helped* till he was *ſtrong*; but when he was ſtrong *his heart was lifted up* to his deſtruction for he tranſgreſſed againſt the

the Lord his God, 2. *Chr.* 4. 5. and 14. 15. It was not ſo with *Jehoſaphat*, he ſought the Lord God of his Fathers, and walked in his Commandments, and not after the doings of (backſliding) *Iſrael*, *Therefore* the Lord *ſtabliſhed* the Kingdom in his Hand, and all *Judah* brought him Preſents, and he had riches and honour in aboundance; *And his Heart was lifted up in the wayes of the LORD.* Piety procures a ſettlement, and that brings off the People to an acknowledgment of their Magiſtrate; & to a love unto Him, and that uſhers in plenty and aboundance, and an Honeſt Heart in the midſt of it all, is carried Higher and and Nearer to God, as the waters bare up the Ark, and lifted it nearer Heaven. 2 Chron. 17 4, 5, 6,

If it be thus with thee, in thy meaſure, ſure, there may be and will be ſome Leaven of Hypocriſie, which may ſomewhat ſour thy performances, which yet upon thy Humiliation ſhall be pardoned: And thy Judge himſelf and his Deputy in thine own boſom will pronounce that thou art no Hypocrite.

CASE VII.

Fear of being acted only by Fear.

Fear of being acted only by Fear. Rom. 8. 15. 2. Tim. 1. 7.

PERADVENTURE thou mayeſt reply, though I may prove no Hypocrite, yet I ſhall prove little better than a *Slave*. I Fear I am Awed and Acted only by *A Spirit of Fear*, & this is far from a Goſpel-Spirit, from a Spirit of Adoption; they are ſet as adverſaries and Antipodes one againſt another: and if there were not a dread of God upon my Spirit, if Deſtruction from God were not a Terrour unto me, I know not what would become of me, nor whether Satan and my corruptions would Hurry me. Well, yet go and order thy cauſe before him, and fill thy Mouth with *Arguments*.

Arguments Firſt, Ask him if He have not obſerved ordinarly thy Spirit to be more melted & *Humbled* when he hath filled thy heart with joy, and thy Mouth with Praiſes, than by any evill Felt or Feared, than by the ſenſe or approach of any evil whatſoever, & is thithes Frame of a Slave, or of a Child?

Secondly, Tell him 'tis true, thou feareſt him (and ſo do all the Saints & Angels in Heaven) but 'tis with ſuch a Fear as *Enlargeth* thy Heart towards

Fear

him, and doth not straiten it; such a Fear as is an helper of thy *Joy*, not an enemy to it; such a fear as furthers the *Comforts of the Holy Ghost*; such a fear as hath *no torment* in it: and therefore love though perfected shall never cast it out; and thou didst never see a good day, till this took hold of thee; dost never enjoy a good hour when this doth not over-rule thee. 'Tis *a better* thing to thee that ever thou wert without it, *Jer.* 2. 19. Isa. 60. 5. Psal. 2. 11. Act. 9. 31. 1 Joh. 4. 18.

Thirdly, Tell Him it is *Him* and *his goodness* that thou feareſt, his frown, his absence, his *silence*, are now more dreaded by thee than all his Darts and Thunders used to be formerly; the loss of a smile, of a *Kiss*, a kindness, is that thou most Feareſt, and this thou takeſt to be a Spirit of Ingenuity, not of Slavery. Hos. 3. 5. Psal. 28. Cant. 5. 2.

Fourthly, he knows thy voice, and can tell whether he hear any of *His own Language* from thee or no, how badly and brokenly soever it be pronounced; though thou *chatterest like a Crane, or a Swallow, or mournest like a Dove*, as *Hezekiah* speaks of himself, *Isa.* 38. 14.

Every creature conveys its sound, its tone and tune to the young ones, and none of his children are still born; the Spirit unties their tongues, and sets

them a crying *Abba Father*; and he knows thou doſt cry ſometimes: not coldly tender him ſome dead prayers, but cry, and not as a thief at a Bar to a Judge whom he neither loves nor hath any confidence in, but as a poor child when in diſtreſs who daily aſks his Fathers Bleſſing.

Gen. 27. 21, 22.

Fifthly, Deſire him that he would *feel* thee as *Iſaac* did *Jacob*; The deſire of thy ſoul is not only to have a ſmooth Voice, but Hands alſo ſo far from roughneſs; that he may for ever own thee as one of the ſeed of *Jacob*, thy heart is againſt a Covenant, of Works, but for all the works of the Covenant.

CASE VIII.

Senſe of fearful Back-ſlidings.

Senſe of backſliding.

OH, but *The Treacherous Dealers have dealt Treacherouſly*; *yea the Treacherous Dealers have dealt very Treacherouſly*; thy Revoltings have been multiplied, and thy *Back-ſlidings* are many, and how ſhall He Pardon thee for this? It puts God himſelf to a Pawſe, to a Stand, to Demur upon it, *Jer.* 5. 7. and *Chap.* 3. 19. *How ſhall I put thee among the Children?* Nay, *Chap.* 2. 29.

29. He ſeemeth to put a ſtop to all further pleading; *Wherefore will ye plead with me, ye all have tranſgreſſed againſt me, ſaith the Lord*: Nay, which is the worſt of all, the Holy Spirit of God being hereby *grieved*; where haſt thou now another friend to ſpeak a good word for thee? when the Father is offended, there's the Son to mediate for thee: and when Chriſt is diſobliged, yet there is the Spirit to intercede for thee, but when the Spirit is vexed and quenched, there's never a fourth Perſon in the Trinity to make up the breach to compromiſe the difference; who ſhall now put words into thy mouth, or fill thy mouth with *Arguments*? yet even in this *Caſe* try him, if he will not help thee at this dead lift, and prove an Advocate for thee; for he himſelf hath pen'd a form of prayer for one in thy caſe, *Hoſ.* 14. 1, 2, 3. Go then even to this holy Spirit, and fill thy mouth with *Arguments*.

Arguments

Firſt, Tell him thou haſt read or heard of his *Goodneſs*, *Pſal.* 142. 10. and of his *Love*, *Rom.* 15. 30. Not only that which he begets in the Saints, but that which he bears to them, all the World hath had experience of it, the Church eſpecially; and thou art

not altogether a ſtranger to it, & haſt now occaſion further to try it; and hopeſt to find it, no whit inferiour either to that of the Father in giving his Son, or that of the Son in giving himſelf for thee; though he hath not been equally loved and honoured with them, but wofully neglected and forgotten.

Secondly, Aſk him if it be poſſible for thee to be in a worſe plight than when he firſt had to do with thee? and did he then fall to work upon thee when he might have abhor'd to foul his fingers with thee, *and will he now forſake the work of his own hands? Pſal.* 138. 8.

Thirdly, Thou hopeſt he will dwell in thy duſt when death hath done its worſt unto thee, and raiſe that again, according to *Rom.* 8. 11. and will he now forſake thy ſoul and not raiſe that again, now that ſin and the Devil have done their worſt againſt it; for worſe than what hath been, thou thinkeſt, cannot befall thee.

Fourthly, Have not the moſt eminent Saints that ever he dwelt in, had their backſlidings, and ſinned even againſt that grace wherein lay their excellency, were they all reſtored by him, and ſhalt thou only be abandoned?

Fifthly,

Fifthly, were not all those gracious tenders to Backsliders, framed, filed, and recorded by him? *Jer.* 3. 22. *Return ye backsliding Children and I will heal your backslidings: Behold we come unto the for thou art the Lord our God,* Hosea 14. 4. *I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away from them*; and in many other places; and beg he would teach thee experimentally to know what is meant by God's healing backslidings.

Sixthly, He knows that nothing in the world ever so wounded thee or went so near thy heart, as thy tempting and grieving of him hath done; and thou art resolved never to forgive thy self, though he do, no (as sometimes thou thinkest) not in Heaven.

Seventhly, He knows that thou art to this day wailing, and wondering, and waiting, to know wherefore thou wert so left unto thy self, and that thou art far from wipeing thy mouth and slighting of it; thou canst not but think that God hath some design upon thee therein as he had upon *Hezekiah*, 2. Chron. 32. 31. *God left him to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart:* and little didst thou think when

God first turned thy heart unto himself, there had been that in it which since hath broken forth from it, nor was ever any so deceived in thee as thou hast been in thy self, but art resolved now against that folly of trusting in thine own heart any more.

Prov. 28. 26.

Eightly, Ask him upon what terms he first entered upon thy heart; Was it not with a Commission there to stay, how ill soever treated or entertained? So says Christ, it was agreed on, *Joh.* 14. 16. *And I will Pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter that he may abide with you for ever.*

Thou wouldst not for a World have him only upon the same account. The first *Adam* had him in his state of innocency, concurring meerly as a *third Person* in the Trinity, but by vertue of a relation to the *second*; and then he must never leave thee, he must not only *alight* but *abide* also, as upon the head, so upon the Members, *John* 1. 32, 33.

Ninthly, Say to him, hereby shalt thou know that he is God indeed, equal to the Father and the Son, and that though all the world should conspire against him to *un-God* him, yet shall his invincible patience, and insuperable

perable Good-will, raiſe an everlaſting *Pillar of witneſs* in thy boſome, let who will caſt him off, he ſhall be thy God for ever; *Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquities*, Mich. 7. 18. is equally true of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

CASE IX.

Senſe of ſtrong Corruption.

BUT ſtill thy heart akes and is diſquieted, to think that what's ſaid of a man of great wrath, *Prov.* 19. 19. is alſo moſt true of thee, ſuch an one muſt needs ſuffer puniſhment; for if thou deliver him, yet thou muſt do it again, he'l ever and anon bring himſelf into the briers; and this is thy caſe, though the ſweet Spirit of God be willing to forgive thee former Offences, and to fetch thee off from thy Imbroylments, yet is he likely to have an heavy hand with thee, conſidering thy *corruptions* and temptations; thou art likely to run upon a new ſcore, to run into new rebellions, and there will be no end of all his labour; yet in this caſe go and order thy cauſe before God the Father and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and fill thy mouth with Arguments. Senſe of Corruption.

1. Aſk

Matth. 4. 23. Mind him how long thou haſt lain and languiſhed on this diſeaſe. Lo theſe eighteen, it may be eight and thirty years or longer. Rom. 6. 6.

1. Ask Him, Was not this one great end why our nature was taken into perſonal union with the divine, that the diſeaſes of the one might be healed by the infinite vertue and purity and efficacy of the other? did Chriſt come only to cure the ſickneſſes of the body? or were not all theſe cures the types and repreſentations of thoſe he came to work upon the ſouls of ſinners? ſure ſuch as touch Him by Faith, ſhall have their bloody iſſues ſtopped, and all other inward diſtempers cured: in the days of his fleſh *he went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the devil*, Acts 10. 38. and lamentable were our loſs by his removal to Heaven, if from thence his vertue could not reach us; and if he were now on earth, thou art verily perſwaded thou might'ſt have help from him; why not from Heaven?

2. Did He not die that ſin might die and be deſtroyed? he was not only cloathed with our nature, but ſtrip'd by the ſeperation of ſoul and body (though not of the Godhead from either) that ſin and our ſouls might be ſeparated: why doth ſin live, ſeeing Chriſt died?

3. Demand even of Juſtice, if Chriſt hath not fully paid thy ranſome? why then art thou kept in bonds? holden with the

the cords of thy sins? the worst usage which the worst of men in this world are threatned with; *Prov.* 5. 22. his own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be *holden with the cords of his sins*; the vilest dungeon to this without this, is a pleasant palace, a delightful garden, as was said by some of the blessed Martyrs of their prisons.

4. Complain that these corruptions do wrong, defile and outrage that nature which Christ now wears in Heaven, and hath exalted far above the brigtest Cherub; for He and his are all of a piece, *Heb.* 2. 11. and this is a thousand shames and pities.

5. If there be any seed of God, any beginning of that everlasting work of sanctification in thee, thou art now become *a member of his body, of his flesh and of his bones*, Eph. 5. 30. (for Christ never took any but sanctified flesh upon him) and how then can he hide himself from his own flesh? he would not have us do so, *Isa.* 58. 7. how can he indure to see his own flesh so shamfully abused?

He who made a Law a man should not hide himself when he saw his enemies beast sink down under his burden, the Ass of one who hated him, *Exod.* 23. 5. Doth he take care for Oxen and for Asses

Asses? and can he himself forbear to help up the Soul of one that loves him? and will he not help with him? or if thou art afraid to say thou loveſt him, becauſe thy heart is ſo little with him, yet to be ſure there's a poor ſoul down, and will he not help it up? will he not help it? and that againſt thoſe oppreſſours which are as well the enemies of his praiſe and glory as of thy peace and ſafety.

And ſurely theſe Cananites are left in the Land, as it was in the figure.

To keep down pride, *Deut.* 7. 22.

To try whether we will follow the Lord or our luſts, *Judg.* 2. 23.

To teach us war, and to exerciſe our graces, *Judg.* 3. 1.

To make us to keep more above, upon the mountains, *Judg.* 1 34.

To become tributaries and do our drudgery, 1. *Kings* 10. 21. God makes our corruptions do us ſome ſervice, which our graces cannot do without them.

CASE X.

Fear of Affliction.

BUT peradventure thou maiſt think with thy ſelf, that through grace (whereunto nothing is impoſſible) thou maiſt be both pardoned and purified too

in

in time, but it will coſt thee dear: firſt, a world of *Afflictions* muſt be expected where there hath been ſuch a World of Provocations, and yet remains ſuch a maſs of corruption; and theſe fears of what may come, take thee off from enjoying what is preſent: Go with this complaint to thy Judge, that theſe fears may be diſarmed, and bound over, no more to moleſt thee; go fill thy mouth with Arguments: For who can ſay his mountain is ſo ſtrong he ſhall never be moved? Or who can Fore-tell or fore-ſee the things that may befall him; even pardoning mercy it ſelf is no fence againſt this flail of Affliction. 2. *Sam.* 12. 13, 14. Pſal. 99. 8.

1. Tell Him whatever comes, 'tis thy deſire to bear his Indignation, becauſe thou haſt ſinned againſt him, *Mich* 7. 9. and that thy ſtubborn uncircumciſed heart may accept of the Puniſhment of thine iniquity, becauſe, even becauſe tho haſt deſpiſed his judgements, and carried it as if thy Soul had abhorred his ſtatutes, *Lev.* 26. 43. Nay, *Severa diſciplina mihi ſericordia.* Heb. 12. 6, 7. *Cato* choſe rather not to be rewarded when he did well, than not to be puniſhed when he did amiſs *Plut. in Vit.*

2. Tell him that thou hadſt rather be under the ſchooling of his children, than the cockering of his caſtawayes, under the ſevere mercy of his diſcipline (as *Auguſtine* ſpeaks of that of the Church) than under the impunity of thoſe deſperate

perate loſt creatures whom God hath thrown up as a loſt caſe, and will not be at the coſt to beſtow another rod upon them, even his correcting rod as well as his ſupporting ſtaff ſhall be a comfort to thee, *Pſal.* 23. 4. no puniſhment like impunity.

3. Though it be infinitly more eligible that way to be humbled and reformed than not at all, yet tell him, if he will be pleaſed to ſpare thee, 'twill be more for his honour to do it in the midſt of proſperity, becauſe this is more difficult and more unuſual: *Jer.* 22. 21. *I ſpake unto thee in thy proſperity, but thou ſaidſt I will not hear, this hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedſt not my voice.* Now what a *glory* will it be to him, to bore thine ear in the midſt of thy proſperity.

4. As this will be more glorious for Him, ſo more *uſefull* to others, the examples of ſuch a convert is much more conſpicuous and illuſtrious; in miſerable ones 'tis hard to diſtinguiſh between a devaſtation and a reformation, between their trouble for ſin, and for ſuffering, in perſons not humbled and yet humble, outwardly happy and yet weaned from the breaſts of ſinful pleaſures, 'tis very viſible that 'tis not *abſence* but *abſtinence*

ſtinence; that they do not make a vertue of neceſſity, that 'tis voluntary not extorted; and beſides men are far more forward to imitate the happy than the wretched and miſerable, to write after a fair copy than one all blotted and blur'd, foyld and ſullied by the tears and ſweat of affliction, the examples only of ſuch as are ſome way happy or eminent carry compulſion in them, *Gal.* 2. 14.

5. Tell Him however ſo he will go with thee through fire and water, according to his gracious promiſe, *Iſa.* 43. 2. thou art not afraid to venture, thou wilt interpret it to be his *affection* as well as his *faithfullneſs*, his *magnifying* of thee, his *ſetting* his *heart* upon thee, *Job.* 7. 17, 18. his *utmoſt kindneſs* unto thee, ſeeing he himſelf ſtiles it ſo. *Jer.* 9. 7. *Behold I will melt them and try them*, for what elſe ſhall I do, *what more can I do for the daughter of my people?* Some affirm, if a knife or needle be touched with a Loadſtone of an iron colour, it will cut or enter into a mans body without any ſenſe of pain at all: 'tis true of afflictions well touched with the Loadſtone of divine Love. *Bleſſed is the man whom thou chaſteneſt O Lord, and teacheſt him out of thy Law, that thou mayeſt*

Cardan. de ſubt. lib. 17. Mountebanks make uſe of this experiment

mayeſt give him reſt from the days of adverſity Pſal. 94. 12, 13. This then is a bleſſed condition, when correcton and inſtruction are linked together and thou canſt not be happy without it, nor haſt thou been over-eager after deliverance, when in affliction thou haſt enjoyed his precious preſence.

Job. 5. 17 Prov. 3. 12.

CASE XI.

Senſe of extremity of Pain.

Senſe of pain.

BUT 'tis hard to keep in this mind when it comes to the tryall, eſpecially when God puts forth his hand and toucheth to the quick, when he toucheth the bone & the fleſh, then (ſaith the devil of *Job*) he will never endure that, *he will curſe thee to thy face*, *Job* 2. 25.

In extremitie of pain when thy Spirit is ready to fail before him, and the Soul which he hath made, art apt to ſay in thine heart, where is all that Sweetneſs and Tenderneſs thou mad'ſt thy boaſt of? Where is now thy Fear, thy Confidence, the uprightneſs of thy ways and thy Hope? and this may be thy Caſe, how ſtrong and how healthful ſoever thou haſt been hitherto.

Job. 4. 6.

Yet even then labour to order thy cauſe before him, and fill thy mouth with

with arguments, and if our hearts reproach us not, if they condemn us not for secret Atheists and notorious dissemblers, we may have boldness and freedom of speech in all these cases, 1 *John* 3. 21. and in this case it is a shamefull thing for a professed Christian, to know no other way of complaint or cure then a beast doth, *Hos.* 7. 14. A beast when in pain will cry, and may be cured by time and remedies; a Christian indeed hath a Spiritual way of complaining, which affords more ease than the natural: therefore in case of pain,

In case of pain.

1. Justifie him, & tell him thou knowest that he exacteth of thee less then thine iniquity deserveth; tell him those parts that feel the pain, have deserved Infinitly more than they feel; call to minde those very Times and Places wherein they have provoked the eyes of his glory; the wicked devices of thy head, the wretched desires of thy heart, the pollutions of thy hands, the swiftness of thy feet to do evil (only take heed of repeating those sins by any cursed titilation or delight in the remembrance of them,) confess the whole body hath deserved to be laid upon the rack in hell, and never let down to all Eternity. Yet Job 11. 6

2. Make bold to mind him how utterly *unuſefull* thou now art unto him, unleſs he will fill and furniſh thee with ſtrength and patience to glorifie him in ſuffering, now that he is not pleaſed to imploy thee in doing; and if ſo, though thou ly in Hell, there ſhall be never a devil in it to torment thee.

3. Aſk him if he can take any *Pleaſure* in thy pain? if that be agreeable to the incomparable ſweetneſs of his only good nature? if that can be ſuitable to the bowels and Compaſſions of thoſe *Relations* wherewith he hath condeſcended to aray himſelf? did ever the harſheſt Parent beat a Child (how bad ſoever) all the day long, and all the night, or ſo long together without intermiſſion? thus *Hezekiah* reaſoneth, from day even to night, wilt thou make an end of me? I reckoned till Morning (I thought then he would
Pſal. 30. 5. give over,) I thought though *ſorrow may endure for a night, yet joy cometh in the morning*, but as a Lyon, ſo will he break all my bones, from day even to Night wilt thou make an end of me. *Iſa.* 38. 12, 13.

Can this ſeverity be conſiſtent with the ſweeteſt relations? And what are the bowels of all the Relations in the World

World to God's, but flints & Adamants?

Ask him then with this complaint of *Job*, *Is it good to thee that thou shouldst oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands? Thine hands have made me and fashioned me together round about, yet thou dost destroy me: Remember I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into dust again?* (wilt thou pound me into powder before my time?) *Job* 10. 3, 8, 9, &c. Or if that could be his pleasure and his pastime (which sure it is not,) yet ask him if thou art a fit match or mark for him? *Am I a sea or a Whale, that thou settest a watch over me?* Job 7. 12. There's a pride and a power worthy of his curbing and coping with, some Leviathan or Behemoth, may be a fit subject for him that made him, to make his sword approach unto, his bones are as strong pieces of brasse, his bones are like Bars of Iron; but mine are not so, *Is my strength the strength of stones, or is my flesh of brass?* alas no, he knows the contrary, hath he not poured me out as *Milk* and cruddled me like *Cheese*? which will soon crumble under his fingers, wherefore then hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine Enemy, wilt

Job. 40. 18, &c.

Job 6. 12.

Job 13. 14. thou break a poor *leafe* driven to and fro, and wilt thou purſue the *dry ſtuble?*

Jb 10. 2. *for thou writteſt bitter things againſt me, and makeſt me to poſſeſs the Iniquities of my youth; ceaſe from me,* and let me alone, *that I may take Comfort a little.*

And will he not be intreated? mind him that he himſelf hath told thee, that he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the *Children of men,* to cruſh under his feet all the *priſoners of the Earth,* Lam. 3. 33, 34. not the Children of men, much leſſe then the Children of God, his own Children; and thou hopeſt thou doſt look like one of them, yea, that thou art one of them,

Not the priſoners of the Earth, and will he cruſh either with his foot or his hand the free born Citizens of Heaven, thoſe whom the Son hath made free, and ſo are *free indeed*; and if thou art a priſoner, thou art *a priſoner of hope,* thou haſt ſometimes thought, that *he hath looſed thy bands,* and ſaid unto thy Soul *go forth*; and thou canſt not yet caſt away thy confidence.

Gal. 4. 26. Joh. 8. 36 Zech. 9. 12. Iſa. 49 9. & 61. 1.

Iſa. 53. 10. 4. Aſk Him, Why did he take pleaſure in the pains of his dear Son, in cruſhing and *bruiſing* of him as in a Wine Preſs, ſure that work in it ſelf was no ſuch pleaſing work unto

Jer. 9. 24. Mich. 7. 18.

Him

Him, but only as it made way and gave vent to that which is his pleaſure, the exerciſe of Love and Mercy; that was but a medium to this end, and in it ſelf a bitter one to God Himſelf, ſave only as this ſweetned it.

Now why did he *put him to grief* if he received no ſatisfaction thereby? were not his head, and heart, and hands, and feet, and ſides tormented, that thine might be ſpared? ſurely the ſins of all believers were *puniſhed* and payed for to the full, in and by their Surety, and are only *corrected* in themſelves; though therefore thou haſt cauſe to bewail and to be amazed at the naughtineſs of that heart which calls for ſuch rods; yet it cannot but be a chearing to thee that God is not reckoning with thee, as if he meant to fetch his penny-worths, his compenſations to his Juſtice out of thy ſmartings.

Laſtly Aſk Him if he himſelf *ſmart* not in thy ſufferings? If Chriſt Himſelf do not ſuffer and bleed afreſh? If his Compaſſion do not almoſt renew and repeat His Paſſion, has loſt his old wont elſe; In all the afflictions of His People He was wont to be afflicted, (even before His Incarnation, when He had not thoſe Bowels of a Man that

now He hath,) *Isa.* 63. 9. And though no pain can have any place in Heaven, yet love in its perfection feels something by way of Sympathy, not only Analogous and proportionable, but infinitly more high and generous than we can think of.

Though therefore there be a far greater hight of love expressed in his afflicting, than in his cockering and carking, yet beg he would either moderate or withdraw His hand, considering whereof thou art made, and remembering thou art but dust, and thou shalt either have ease and deliverance, or that which is far better, an ample participation in *his holiness*, and *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory.*

Heb. 12. 10, 11, 12. 2 Cor. 4. 17.

CASE XII.

Desertion felt, or feared.

Desertion felt, or feared.

BUT may some poor soul say, 'twere well if I might escape with the smartings and sufferings of the outward man, with the pain of the body which is but the body of pain; the sorrow of the soul is the soul of sorrow, and either I feel or fear *desertion*; having found Him whom my soul loveth, I would fain have held him and not have let him go, I would not let him go with-

Cant. 3. 4.

without a blessing, nay, I would have the blessing and keep him too, his presence being the best of blessings, but woe unto me when he departs from me.

Now though this be the most darksome and dolesome condition that can befall thee, yet 'tis neither desperate nor unusual; Go therefore even in this case and order thy cause before him and fill thy mouth with *Arguments.*

1. Tell Him, 'tis but fit indeed that he should assert his own Soveraignity, by coming or going when he pleaseth; but why should he take a pleasure to be a hiding God, where he is a Saviour, to be a stranger in his own Land, in *Immanuel's* land, and to be at his own house, as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night, seeing he alone is the hope thereof, and the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble? *yet thou O Lord art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy Name, leave us not.* Thus *Jeremiah* pleads Chap. 14. 8, 9. *Arguments.* Isa. 45 15

2. Make bold to mind his Blessed Majesty of those many engagements made by Himself and Son, never to leave thee nor forsake thee: Shew him those promises, *John* 14. 21. *He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father,*

and I will love him and will *manifeſt* my ſelf unto him: and *ver.* 23. my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and *make our abode with him*, and whether thou *loveſt* Him or no, notwithſtanding thy many practical denyings of him, thou canſt with *Peter* appeal to Omniſciency it ſelf, let him judge; *Lord thou knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that I love thee*, John 21. 17. Nay, hath He not ſaid, that He will not caſt off his People, No not for all that they have done *againſt* Him, *Jer.* 31. 37. and if not for what they have done, what is there elſe that they need fear, 1. *Sam.* 12. 20, &c. Fear not, ye have done all this wickedneſs, yet turn not aſide from following the Lord; for *the Lord will not forſake his People, ſeeing it hath pleaſed the Lord to make you His People*; He can neither be inconſtant in His Love, nor ſo miſtaken in His Choiſe as to repent thereof.

3. Tell the Son of Righteouſneſs, 'tis true, thou canſt neither bear His *Shinings*, nor *Eclipſes*, but much leſs theſe, than thoſe; thou hadſt much rather chuſe to be brunt up by his flames and imbracings, than to be frozen up and ſtarv'd in the ſhadow of his abſence & with-

withdrawings; thou hadſt rather *gaze* out thine own eyes, than *weep* them out; wouldſt rather chuſe to dy with *Moſes* at the mouth of the Lord, have thy Soul ſuckt out by a kiſs (as ſome ſay his was) than to pine away from day to day, through the hidings of his face and withholdings of his favour.

Deut. 34. 5. So *Moſes* died at the mouth of the Lord. *Super os Domini.* Mont.

4. Tell Him, if thou hadſt never known Him, thou couldſt have been without Him, at leaſt without any preſent ſenſe of ſorrow for his abſence; but now having taſted that he is gracious, in his favour is thy life, and his loving kindneſs is better than life, and thou canſt not make a ſhift to be one day without him.

Pſal. 30. 5. & 63. 3.

5. Tell Him, If the loſs were total and final, 'twere perfect *Hell*, and the worſt of Hell, the puniſhment of loſs being concluded to be far greater than that of ſenſe; and if it be but partial and for a time, for a moment (as he calls it, *Iſa.* 54. 7, 8. a ſmall moment, though thou thinkeſt it an Age) yet who can be content to be in Hell, in an Hell above ground, though but for a moment.

6. Tell Him, He had as good return at firſt as at laſt, for as till then thou art ſure to have *no reſt* thy ſelf, ſo he is likely

likely to have but little; Heaven is like to Ring out, and thou haſt a warrant under his own hand, to bear thee out in ſuch a reſtleſs importunity; not only the Watchmen ſet upon the Walls of *Jeruſalem*, are never to hold their peace day nor night, but *all ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not ſilence*, and give him *no reſt*, till he eſtabliſh, and till he make *Jeruſalem a praiſe in the earth*, Iſa. 62. 6, 7.

7. Ask him, Why was *Chriſt forſaken* by him, but that Chriſtians might never be ſo: Chriſt himſelf expoſtulated the caſe, and put the queſtion upon the Croſs, *My God my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* and thou hopeſt thoſe living words of His dying Son have made ſo deep an impreſſion that they will never out of his mind, ſhall never be forgotten.

Mat. 27. 46.

CASE XIII.

Exerciſed in Friends, Relations, Name or Eſtate.

Exerciſed in friends Relations, Name, or Eſtate.

YET may ſome complain and ſay, God is pleaſed indeed to ſpare me both as to ſoul and body, but yet his hand is out againſt me, and lyes ſore upon me in my relations, friends, name, eſtate, which are no mean ingredients, either

either as to the sweetning or imbitterig, of my cup: yet in this case go to Him, order thy cause before him, and fill thy mouth with *Arguments.*

Arguments

1. Doth he threaten the removal of some near and dear relations? tell Him they are pieces of thy self; and is he now about to rend the caule of thine heart, and hath not fitted thee for resignation?

2. He knows that the *last corruption* mortified in his Children, is inordinatness of affection to relations; when they come to dy themselves, and are already dead to all things else in the World, yet still the heart hankers after these, this is next to the Soul, as the shift is to the body, and is last put off: and is it so difficult to dy to relations, when we our selves are dying, putting off from the shoar of this world, and launching into the deeps of eternity: have we so much ado then to shake hands and bid farewell to our friends? what is it then when we see them pluckt from us, when the life of all passions and affections is whole and strong in us, scarce deaded at all to our enemies, to those things we ought to hate, much less to our friends, to those persons whom we ought to love; beg him to consider and pitty thee in this difficulty.

3. Tell

3. Tell Him, He knows thou tookeſt them as tokens and pledges of his *love*, and wer't wont to ſpeak of them in thine heart in the language of *Jacob*, Gen. 35. 5. *Theſe are the* friends, the *children*, the comforts, *which God hath graciouſly given His Servant*; and thou feareſt now that he is about to take them away in *anger*, and the ſignification of the ſtroke is that which diſquiets thee, (like the hand writing upon the wall) much more then the ſtroke it ſelf.

Dan. 5. 5, 6.

4. Tell Him (when they are gone or going) thou art reſolved never to recruit with Creatures; Ask Him if He will be pleaſed to ſtand in the breach and to fill up the gap Himſelf, he ſayes he *offers* Himſelf thereunto, *Heb.* 12. 7. courting thee to accept of his company and ſupply; and if he will make good his offer, he ſhall be better unto thee than ten of thoſe relations, friends, comforts, yea, than ten thouſand ſuch things as He firſt lent thee or put into thy hand to hold for him, and now hath ſeen it meet to call for away from thee.

προσφέρεται

5. Tell Him, As for thy *Name* 'tis in his keeping, muſt have a reſurrection as well as thy body, though the one deſerve to rot as well as the other; and if his name were not concerned in it, thou wouldeſt

wouldeſt neither trouble Him nor thy ſelf about it, 1. *Cor.* 4. 3. with me it is a very ſmall thing to be judged of men.

6. He knows that though thy liquorishneſs after Creatures hath coſt thee dear, yet it hath been the endeavour of thy Soul *to live upon Him alone*, in the midſt of all other Comforts, to make Him thy All, above All, with All, who ſhall hereafter be All, without All; and that in the mean time, thou mighteſt live upon him without other things; If it ſhould pleaſe him to ſtrip thee of them, as knowing that there was a worm at the root of thoſe gourds, which would one day deprive thee of their refreſhing ſhadow, and he knows that ſometimes when friends have failed, though at firſt thou wert amazed, yet upon recollection thou haſt rejoyced to find thy ſelf laid at his door alone for help, and thou haſt found Him alone All-ſufficient for thee, and He hath done that alone which he would not do in *conſort* with ſecond cauſes.

Laſtly, He knows how often thou haſt offered Him (if He would ſend thee) to go after thoſe ancient ſervants and ſufferers for His Name, *Heb.* 11. 37, 38. *to wander about in ſheep-skins and goat-skins*, ſo that leathern outſide might be well lined

lined with divine love; *to wander in mountains*, ſo thou mighteſt be nearer to Him, *in deſarts*, ſo He would not deſert thee, ſo He would not be a wilderneſs or a land of darkneſs to thee; *in dens and caves of the earth*, ſo they might be furniſhed and beautified, guilded and Glorified with His Preſence, His precious All-ſufficeing Preſence.

And he makes but a bad bargin, who takes more of what is leaſt, and is content to be put off with leſs of what is moſt, which thou wilt never be (through his Grace) while thou liveſt.

CASE XIV.

Diſquietment from croſs providences.

Diſquietment from croſs Providences.

YET thou mayeſt proceed and ſay, though he ſpare the main branches, I am often affraid of lopping by ſome particular *unexpected providences*; a little Center of fear or trouble, ſoon darkens the whole circumference of joy and Pleaſure, and on a ſudden, many times the whole Heaven is black with clouds and wind, when at firſt nothing appeared but a little cloud. *Sicut vola hominis*, like a man's hand, which one would have thought would eaſily have been blown over (as *Athanaſius* ſaid of

of the *Arrian* Hereſie, *Nubecula eſt, citò pertranſit*) but it proves far otherwiſe, and who can ſay at all times as *Solomon* once did to *Hiram*, 1. Kin. 5. 4. *Now the Lord my God hath given me reſt on every ſide, ſo that there is neither adverſary nor evil occurrent*; if not now yet thou knoweſt not how ſoon thou mayeſt meet with many adverſaries, many *evil occurrents*: yet in this caſe go unto thy God, order thy cauſe before him and fill thy mouth with *Arguments*.

Aſk Him, if thy *dependence* be not on him alone, for direction, for ſucceſs in all thine undertakeings and concernments: He knows thou haſt no other *Friend* to rely on for counſel or aſſiſtance, and with him the friendleſs and *Fatherleſs* uſe to *find mercy*: becauſe our faith honours him, he uſeth to honour it: *The King truſteth in the Lord, and through the mercy of the moſt high he ſhall not miſcarry*, Pſal. 21. 7. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee, becauſe he truſteth in thee*, Iſa. 26. 3. *Arguments*. Hoſ. 14. 3. Pſal. 62. 1, 2, 5, 6.

Nay he is pleaſed ſometimes to make our faith the rule of his favour, and as it were to give himſelf captive into the hands of our Faith, to be ſuch unto us as we would have him to be: *Matth.* 8. 13, *Go thy way* (ſaith Chriſt

Christ to the Centurion) *and according as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee.* Beg him to lay so unto thee; he knows for what thou hast believed on him.

2. Hath it not been thy manner to go to him, and beg him to go along with thee even in thine ordinary and *smallest* matters (unless thou hast been surprized) and *in these* it is that men, for the most part, miscarry and sometimes stumble fatally, as *Adonijah* did in asking of *Abeshag*, and *Hezekiah* in shewing his Treasures; Men are jealous and timerous in great matters and dare not but carry them to God, but think that small ones are within their own mastery, they need not trouble him about them, and that ruines them, but it is not wont to be so with thee.

1 King. 2. 20. Isa. 39. 4, 6.

3. Thou dost not use after vows to make enquiry; to come to him with all thoughts made up before hand, fully resolved what course thou wilt steer, as the Jews did about their Journey into *Egypt*, no, but in an equilibrious frame of Spirit, he may turn the Scale with a touch of his finger which way he pleaseth; dost thou use to let thy Father chuse for thee, as being unable, unfit to chuse for thy self, and can he chuse amiss?

Jer. 42. 5, 6, 20, 21.

4. Ask

4. Ask Him if thou didst not cast thy self upon Him, beg Mercy and Direction in that very thing which hangs now like a thick Cloud over thine head, and threatens thee with Stormes and Tempests; even *Saul* is afraid to engage without first arming himself by Sacrifice and solemn Supplication, 1. *Sam.* 13. 12. But the Soul takes it ill to Miscarry when it hath done so: not forceing it self, (as *Saul* did) but acting in a spirit of ingenuity. It then expostulates with the Lord, as the *Shunamite* with the Prophet, 2. *King.* 4. 28. *Did I desire a Son of my Lord? Did I not say do not Deceive me.*

5. Didst not thou think at first that the thing was from the Lord, and that he gave thee encouragement therein as *Jacob* pleads with him in this very case, *Gen.* 32. 9, 12. *Thou saidst unto me return and I will deal well with thee, thou saidst thou wouldest do me good*, and wilt thou now suffer my Brother to come *to smite me* (as I fear he will do) *and the Mother with the Children?*

Nay, didst thou not begin to *Rejoyce* in that Providence, in that Relation, in that Business as dropt from a Father's hand? Ask Him if he must now be ashamed of thy Hopes, and repent of thy

rejoycings and the Good thoughts thou hadst conceived of Him? Shalt thou find *a stone* instead of *bread*, & instead of *a Fish a Serpent?* No, one who knows him better than so, hath assured thee of the contrary, *Luk.* 11. 10, 11, *&c.* And therefore at the worst it shall but prove an *advantagious Affliction* to thee, it can never prove a *Curse.*

CASE XV.

Dread of Spiritual Judgements, hardness of Heart, Unprofitableness under the Means of Grace.

Dread of Spiritual *Judgments*

BUT What will it avail me (may some sad soul say) That no Rod toucheth me in any of my outward concernments, if in the mean time I ly under the lash of *Spiritual Judgments*, much Blindness of Mind, Hardness of Heart, Deadness, Coldness, Distractions, Insensibleness of spirit in Holy Duties; under Heavenly Ordinances, Barrenness, Unprofitableness, Unsuitableness to all the cost and care and pains that GOD bestows upon me. This is a Case indeed wherein thou hast need to bestir thy self, To order thy Cause before him and fill thy mouth with *Arguments.* Go tell him,

Arguments:

1. That of all Judgements he knows That

that ſpirituall ones are the moſt dreadfull though leaſt ſenſible, theſe though *Judgements* from Him are *ſins* in us, and Sin is the worſt of Evils, nay, the only evill; Theſe lay load upon the *Soul*, the moſt noble and precious part, no matter if the carcaſs, the cabinet were defaced ſo the Jewel were preſerved.

Theſe are Arguments of the higheſt Indignation, the ſaddeſt Symptomes, the moſt fearfull earneſt of Damnation. 2 Theſ. 2. 12.

Theſe do evidence that there's no union with Chriſt, the end whereof is fruitfullneſs, no ſkreen betwixt the ſoul and wrath, *for the earth which (though it drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it) which beareth Thorns and briers is rejected and is nigh unto curſing, whoſe end is to be burned*, Heb. 6. 7, 8. They who are not for fruit muſt be for fewell, if not for bearing for burning. Rom. 7. 4. Ezek. 15. 6.

Plead therefore as for life, that (unleſs he meant to damn the eternally,) he would make all his Ordinances helpfull, ſweet, ſucceſsfull, Precious and Profitable unto thee.

2. Aſk Him who poured the oyl of Conſecration upon their Heads, whoſe *appointments* are they? Whoſe Image and Superſcription do they bear? and

urge, that it is not for his Honour that they ſhould prove ineffectual, that thou ſhouldſt go and come from the place of the holy and yet remain unholy; that thou ſhouldſt weary thy ſelf with lugging at dry breaſts, which hath occaſioned ſo many in our days, (through their proud impatiency) to lift their heels againſt them; No: let unuſefullneſs be found written upon all Antichriſt's *Inventions*, not upon any of Chriſt's *Inſtitutions*.

Eccleſ. 8. 10.

Offendu. in vindic. veſt. pag. 72.

3. Mind Him, that in the viſible Creation, *all light* is a kind of *flame*, though very thin and exceeding ſubtile; 'tis undeniably true of the light of the Sun, which being contracted and thickned in a glaſs, is wont to burn; now why is it not ſo in the New Creation? art thou not a Child of the day? is not the Sun of Righteouſneſs riſen upon thee? Why is there not *heat* proportionable to all the *light* that thou enjoyeſt? Why ſhould thy hardneſs of heart be encreaſed thereby, rather than abated? As the Earth is in a froſty night, though the Moon then walketh about it in all her brightneſs.

1 Theſ. 5. 5.

4. Make bold to mind Him, that ſuch is the energy and efficacy of his Law of nature, that all *ſpirits* do move and

and ſtir in their appointed *ſeaſons*; wine in the veſſel is wont to work when the vine trees flouriſh; the Characters of ſome fruits imprinted on children, at the time when the ſame Fruits are in ſeaſon, are of a more lively red than at other times, and in ſome perſons do riſe, and ſwell, and grow big like the fruit it ſelf, Mulberries or the like; yea the ſtains thereof in linnen, are ſaid at that time to come forth, and not before: the cauſe is (beſides the power of reſemblance) the diſpoſition of the Air at that ſeaſon, which by the power of God's appointment, is fitly inclined to raiſe up the like ſpirits where ever they are. *Id. ibid.* page, 86, 87. *Gaffarel. Cur.* page 144.

And hath he not made as powerfull Laws in matters of the inviſible creation as of the viſible? are there no ſpirits in his ſpirituall appointments? no Law to make our ſpirits move and ſtir in thoſe ſeaſons of Love and Grace? Why do the wonders of nature remain, when thoſe of Grace ſeem to ceaſe? yea we our ſelves find our ſpirits move and ſtirr with a wonderfull titilation and delight, at our near approach to ſome dear Relations; why ſhould not our ſouls feel the ſame, when we draw nigh to our beſt Friends? Our deareſt

Father, ſweeteſt Saviour only Comforter? *David* telt it ſo, Pſal. 122. 1, 2. *I was glad when they ſaid unto me, let us go into the houſe of the Lord, our feet ſhall ſtand within thy gates O Jeruſalem.*

5. Mind him that 'tis one of his Crown-Jewels, his peculiar prerogative to *teach* his people ſo as to *profit*, Iſa. 38. 17. *Cathedram habet in cœlis qui corda docet*; He who ſpeaks to the Heart ſpeaks from Heaven, hath his pulpit there, one from the dead cannot do it, an Angel from Heaven cannot do it, *Rev.* 3. 7. ὃ ἀνοίγων, *if he be not opening* (though he do nothing to ſhut) *no man can open.* Luke 16. 31.

But if he will be a teacher, it matters not what the ſchollar be; he hath no fellow at it, *who teacheth like him* ſaith *Elihu*, Job. 36. 22.

6. Mind him of his *promiſe*, not only that he will teach, but paſſively that his people ſhall be *taught*, Joh. 6. 45. eſpecially the humble; and it may be thou canſt ſay upon thine own obſervation, I never was proud of any thing, never boaſted of any good *expected*, but I *miſt* it, of any good *enjoyed*, but I loſt it; God will not ſuffer thee to be proud upon any terms, he will rather have thee humbled by thy ſins, than proud

of

of thy Graces; and ſeeing he hath laid thee and keeps thee ſo low, will he not teach thee?

7. Minde him of his *practiſe* all along from the creation to this day; which of all his Saints could not ſay as well as *David*, *Thou O God haſt taught me from my youth up until now*, Pſal. 71. 17. Nay he teacheth the husbandman, *Iſa.* 28. 26. *For his God doth inſtruct him to diſcretion, and doth teach him*: now put him to it and ſay, Lord, art thou the Plowmans God? and doſt thou teach him? and wilt thou not be my God to teach and inſtruct me? to make me wiſe to ſalvation? for *this alſo* (if any thing) muſt *come from him who is wonderful in counſels and excellent in working.*

8. His *goodneſs* puts another argument into thy mouth; *Pſal.* 119. 68. *Thou art good and doeſt good* (and if ever thou wouldeſt do me a goood turn) *O teach me thy ſtatutes.*

9. Appeal unto him if it be not thy practice (as knowing the unfitneſs and unſuitableneſs of thine heart to any holy ſervice) to caſt it into his hand and thence to expect it (when the duty calls for it) of another tincture, put in kelter and fitted thereby for ſpiritual motion? Prov. 16. 1.

10. He knows it is the devil, and his agents and factors thy corruptions, which do diſtract and diſturb thee, and would any parent endure that his *ſlave* ſhould abuſe his *child* before his face, when he is upon his knee for a bleſſing, or comes to receive his commands? Ask him how he can indure to ſee his execrable ſlave inſult over thee before his face? and doth not rate away that curr, and pluck him off, and fling him down to hell from whence he came? why will he not do it? It is the reproach of *Senacherib*'s Idol, that *they who came out of his bowels ſlew him there*, 2 *Chron.* 32. 21. in the houſe of his God, under his Idols noſe, in the very *act of worſhiping*, 2 Kings 19. 37. and he could not protect him: Tell the Lord thy God, the only true God, the living God, it will not be for his honour that thou ſhouldeſt be continually baffled and abuſed by Satan, and thoſe that come forth out of thine *own bowels*, when thou ſetteſt thy ſelf to worſhip him, he looking on, who alone is able to reſcue and relieve thee, whoſe Glory the Devil ſtrikes at herein, as well as at thy peace and ſafety.

11. Tell Him, if he will allow thee nothing at preſent, but the comfort of *obedience*

bedience to ſweeten thy attendance upon him, yet that ſhall not diſcourage thee, that ſhall not rid him of a cuſtomer; his work on earth as well as in Heaven, is both work and wages; not only *for*, but *in keeping his commandements there is great reward*, Pſal. 19. 11. *It is joy to the Juſt to do Jugement*, Pro. 21. 15. and through grace it is ſo in ſome meaſure to thy poor Soul.

12. Laſtly, When at any time thou art afraid to go away from an Ordinance utterly unregarded, from a Sermon, from a Sacrament, from off praying ground, and no notice taken of thee: ſay ſecretly in thy heart, *Lord I am here*; thy poor Client whom Thou knoweſt ſo well, lo here am I; Not one Word? not one look? not one touch this day in this duty?

Say with her in *Judg.* 1. 15. *Give me a bleſſing, for thou haſt given me a South land*, a dry land, *give me alſo ſprings of water*, and thy Father will be as liberal as hers was, he will give thee the *upper ſprings* and the *nether ſprings*; 'tis well he finds thee there, though thou doeſt not yet find Him, thou ſhalt in concluſion be no loſer by it. Iſa. 63. 1. Pſal. 31. 2

CASE

CASE XVI.

Fear that Prayer is not hear'd.

Fear that Prayer is not heard

BUT all these pleadings (may some doubting Soul say) for ought I know may prove in vain, for I have thoughts and oppressing fears sometimes, that a God so high, holy, and happy, is not at all concerned, minds not the *addresses* of a worm so wofull, so sinfull, so full of distresses and distractions, no more than a man minds the movings or murmurings of flies or bees, which mov's swiftest or hums sweetest, for we are infinitly less to Him than they are compared with us; and sometimes I find no answer at all, or so strange and contrary, that my fears are strengthned and confirmed.

Now though this temptation cannot prevail far upon thee (at least not finaly) if thou art a constant pleader with God, yet it is needful when it doth but shew it self, to go and order thy cause before him, and fill thy mouth with *Arguments* against it.

1. Call to mind how God Himself hath affirmed the contrary, and tell him thou dareſt not question the truth of his engagements, *Psal.* 138. 6. *Though the Lord be high yet hath he regard unto the*

the lowly, he doth not at all forget himſelf when he remembers thee; Nay, he ſets forth himſelf in all his Sublimity and Glory, when he profeſſeth the greateſt kindneſs and condeſcention to thoſe who judge themſelves leaſt capable of it. *Iſa.* 57. 15. *Thus ſaith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whoſe Name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place*, here's enough to make all the creatures that ſhould hear it exceedingly to fear and quake (as 'tis ſaid of *Moſes*, *Heb.* 12. 21.) and yet what follows? what a ſoft ſtill voice after all this thunder? I dwell *alſo with him that is of a broken and humble ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones*, ſo that he who is brought below the condition of a Creature broken and crumbled to nothing, may yet be a companion for this high and holy One: ſo in *Iſa.* 66. 2. though Heaven be my Throne, and the Earth my Footſtool; *yet to this man will I look that is poor and of a contrite Spirit, and that trembleth at my word*: Ask him now, whether this be the preſumption, the Device of any Creature, or his own diſcovery which he hath made of himſelf, and tell him with an Holy plainneſs & boldneſs, that he hath

now

now *enſnared* himſelf (if thou mayeſt with Reverence ſay ſo) with the words of his Mouth, He cannot go back, and thou haſt no Reaſon to think He hath any inclination ſo to do; *Lord thou haſt heard the deſire of the Humble*, Pſal. 10. 17. Ay, and *He will regard the Prayer of the deſtitute and not deſpiſe their prayer*, Pſal. 102. 17.

2. Tell Him 'tis true the diſtance is vaſt, and wide, and infinite, far above that betwixt thee and the ſilliеſt flie, which thou canſt fillip to death at thy pleaſure, yet he hath given thee a capacity of Communion with Him, which thoſe *inſecta* have not with us; and thou doeſt often obſerve, that a parent is more taken with his little ones liſping and offering at words, than with all the Rhetorique of the moſt florid and fluent Orator in the world, *and like as a Father* hath bowels of tenderneſs towards his Children, ſo, yea infinitly more than ſo hath the Lord towards them that *fear him*; plead then with *Nehemiah*, Chap. 1. 11. *O Lord I beſeech thee let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy ſervant, and to the prayer of thy ſervants, who deſire to fear thy name.*

Pſal. 103. 13.

3. Tell him thy conſcience, thine own

own Book as well as his, (the Scripture) aſſures thee, he takes notice every time thou ſinneſt againſt him, why not every time thou prayeſt and ſigheſt after him, *Pſal.* 139. firſt five verſes, *O Lord thou haſt ſearched me and known me*, &c. Hear what a great writer affirmeth, 'Chriſt even as man with his humane 'eyes ſees all the wrongs we do or ſuf-'fer, hears all our prayers with his ears, 'records all our doings; becauſe the 'hotteſt Fire on Earth cannot impart 'its heat to bodies ten miles diſtant, 'cannot the Sun to Bodies more than 'ten hundred thouſand miles diſtant? 'Chriſts glorified humane nature, having 'perſonal union with the Son of God, 'may not be meaſured or bounded by 'other mens faculties or perfections, *The Man Chriſt Jeſus is Mediator*, 1. Tim. 2. 5. *and ſhall be Judge*, Act. 17. 31. And if the man Chriſt Jeſus hear thee, will he not anſwer Graciouſly? If He were on earth thou wouldſt expect it. Dr: *Jackſon* 11. Book *pag.* 33. 2, 3.

4. Tell Him, that moſt men are quick of hearing, when any thing is ſaid that *pleaſeth* them, and ask him whether he be more forward to mind what's moſt contrary than what's moſt agreeable to him? that which gives occaſion to execute vengeance, *his ſtrange act*, *Iſa.* 28. 21.

21. or to exercise mercy, his delight & pleasure, *Mic.* 7. 18. he professeth to listen and hearken after the language of repentance, *Jer.* 8. 6, after holy conference, *Mal.* 3. 16. *The Lord harkned and heard it*, and thou hast no reason in the world to doubt it, 1 *Joh.* 5. 14, 15. *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will he heareth us, and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him. Isa.* 59. 1. Behold *the Lords Hand is not shortned that it cannot save, neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear*; but there's a great objection ver. 2. *Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.* Well yet,

5. Tell Him, thou must not only go contrary to thy *conscience* but to thy *experience* also to suspect him: for thou can'st not but acknowledge that many a time thy prayers have been *nearer* unto Him, 1. *Kings* 8. 59. (as Letters are stuck in the window which we intend to answer) many a time hath He been *nigh* unto thee in all the things thou hast called on Him for, *Deut.* 4. 7. Never hadst thou more sensible Answers from a man

man than thou had'ſt from thy God; thou canſt point to many a mercy as ſhe did to her child, 1. *Sam.* 1. 27. and ſay, *for this mercy I prayed and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him.* Many a time haſt thou had that great priviledge to be one of thoſe that are *near* unto him, *Pſal.* 148. 14. and this *nearneſs* to God in prayer when thou haſt come to thank him for mercies, it hath *renewed* their ſweetneſs, it hath *exceeded* it, when to beg mercies *ſpiritual*, it hath been a *pledge* of them, a *part* of them; *temporal*, it hath been an evidence of a *Grant* of them, or of whats *as good*; yea it ſelf hath been *better*; This experience thou haſt had of *nearneſs* to God in Prayer, and it is not the Sin committing, but the Sin-regairding Sinner whoſe Prayer the Lord will not hear; *but verily God hath heard me, he hath attended to the voice of my prayer*, and therefore I hope I am not ſuch an one in his account and eſtimation, *Pſal.* 66. 18, 19.

It may be thou canſt ſay, *in the day when I cryed thou anſweredſt me, & ſtrengthnedſt me with ſtrength in my Soul*, Pſal. 138. 3. & that's the beſt experience of anſwer to prayer, and therefore thou can'ſt not call his hearing in queſtion, unleſs thou wouldeſt

would'ſt ſay with this *Complainant* (in the worſt ſence that can be put upon theſe words) Job. 9. 16. *If I had called and he had anſwered, yet would I not believe that he had anſwered to my voice.* It looks indeed like the language of a moſt obſtinate and invincible unbelief; as when a man will not believe his Petition granted, though he ſee it granted, but it is rather the language of ſubmiſſion and ſelf-deniall, though I ſpeed never ſo well in my pleading, in my prayers, yet I will never believe that 'tis for any worthineſs in me or them, no 'tis not to my voice, but to the voice of a good Friend of mine, my Mediatour that God hearkens, and for his ſake it is that he ſo Graciouſly anſwers. Wait therefore patiently for the Lord, and he will incline unto thee and hear thy cry, *Pſal.* 40. 1. He never yet *prepared any heart to pray*, but he alſo *cauſed his ear to hear*, Pſal. 10. 17.

Mr. *Caryl* upon the place.

CASE XVII.

Fear that God can never take any ſpecial delight in ſuch a polluted piece.

Fear that God cannot Delight in ſuch a ſinner.

YET may the Believing ſinner find cauſe of complaining and ſay, things may and do run ſmooth, and God is many ways kind unto me, yet can

it can take no place in my Heart that ever he can take any *ſpecial delight* in one that hath been ſo ſtained, ſo corrupt; Sure Chriſt himſelf after ſuch pollutions, provocations, prevarications, abuſe of ſo much light and love, will never look nor ſpeak ſo kindly as formerly, or as he would have done, had it not been for theſe diſ-ſervices and diſ-obligements which I have put upon him; yet try him and order thy cauſe before him: Go fill thy mouth with *Arguments*, in all humility.

1. Aſk the Lord Jeſus if it be not his work to *reconcile*, and is the Reconciler himſelf ſo hard to be reconciled? is the wrath of a Lamb ſo terrible? indeed when the great day of his wrath is come it will be ſo, and who then ſhall be able to abide it? But this is not thy caſe yet: mind him, that the Wiſdom which is from above *is gentle and eaſie to be intreated*, Jam. 3. 17. and ſhalt thou not find the eſſential Wiſdom of the Father to be ſo? is it ſo where there is but a drop, and not ſo where there is the whole Ocean? It is the ſickly Child that hath moſt need of being dandled upon the knee, *Iſa.* 66. 12. The heart of Chriſt is as fit a Receptacle for our ſorrows of all ſorts, as the eye is of Rev. 6. 15, 16, 17.

Collours (as one saith) and is it shut up in endless displeasure against thee only; can any dregs of wrath settle there, unless towards the vessels of wrath? But *Zeph.* 3. 17. *The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty: he will save, he will rejoyce over thee with joy: he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.* And what more can be said to assure thee of his delighting in thee?

2. Doth not the sweet Savour of Christ's sacrifice the odour of his intercession, so diffuse it self and fill Heaven, that the stench of thy sins cannot enter? surely were it not for that perfume, God could never endure the stinking dunghill of this World so near him, to be as a smoak in his nostrils all the day.

Lev. 16. 13. Eph. 5. 2.

3. Plead what Christ himself puts into thy mouth, *Matth.* 18. 13. that the owner of the flock, looks with *more joy, and pleasure, and delight,* upon a poor stray sheep that is recovered than upon the whole flock that never ran that hazard; and hath not Christ a long time had thee in his *Armes,* in his *Bosome,* upon his *Shoulder,* to bring thee back to his fold and favour? 'Tis a *recovering* Church and people which Christ is so taken with, and terms *alone for delights,* Cant. 7. 6. one that had been

Isa. 40. 11 Luk. 15. 5.

forsaken

forſaken and *deſolate* whom the Lord is ſaid to *delight* in, *Iſa.* 62. 4. *Thou ſhalt no more be termed forſaken and deſolate, but thou ſhalt be called* Hephzibah, *for the Lord delighteth in thee*; 'Tis to a *reforming* people, that the Lord engageth, that all Nations ſhall call them *bleſſed*, for ye ſhall be a *delightſome land* ſaith the Lord, *Mal.* 3. 12. And is not Reformation that which thy ſoul laboureth and longeth after.

'Tis a repaired a re-edified Temple, that the Lord promiſeth to take *pleaſure* in, *Hag.* 1. 8. And is not this the work which his Spirit is about in thee, *to raiſe up the Tabernacle of* David *that is fallen down.*

'Tis certain he taketh no *pleaſure* in the death of him that dieth, ſurely then he taketh pleaſure in the life of him, who through his abundant rich grace in Chriſt Jeſus recovereth, *Ezek.* 33. 10, 11. *Therefore O thou Son of Man ſpeak unto the houſe of Iſrael, Thus ye ſpake, ſaying, if our Tranſgreſſions and our ſins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how ſhould we then live? Say unthem, As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, Turn ye from your*

evil wayes, for why will ye dye O houſe of Iſrael?

4. Aſk whether thou art looked on as in thy ſelf, or as *in Chriſt*, in thy ſurety, thy ſecond ſelf, thy head, thy huſband? And a fair face gives the denomination of beautiful to the whole perſon and ſo makes it a delightſome Object: 'Tis only his comelineſs put upon thee muſt make thee lovely.

2. Cor. 5. 17.

Ezek. 16. 14.

5. Aſk whether he look on thee as in thy preſent ſtate or ſtation, or as he ſhall ſee thee, (after a little while) to all eternity? for to him who ſits in that high Tower of Eternity, there's nothing paſt nor to come, but all things are alike in one *perpetual NOW*, preſent before him; now within a while Chriſt will preſent to Himſelf (that he may take a full view of her) *and then to His Father, a glorious Church not having ſpot or wrinkle, nor any ſuch thing, but holy and without blemiſh*, Eph. 5. 27. and if now he view thee in that eternal Glaſs, he may well ſay, *thou art all fair my love, there is no ſpot in thee.*

Cant. 4. 7

6. A *Supper*, a feaſt is for *delight* and cheerfulneſs, and even till *Supper time*, doth Chriſt wait to be gracious, till the ſhadows of the Evening be ſtretched out, *till his head be wet with the dew,*

and

and his locks with the drops of the night. Rev. 3. 20. *Behold, I ſtand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and will ſup with him, and he with me.* Now wouldeſt thou not fain have ſuch a gueſt who alwayes brings his coſt with him? who is both gueſt and entertainment? Doth not thy ſoul cry out to him, *Come in thou bleſſed of the Lord, wherefore ſtandeſt thou without?* Yea, if thou canſt not get open the door, art thou not unfeignedly deſirous that he who hath the key of *David* would open it? nay, rather then fail *break it open*, that ſo the King of Glory might come in and *Sup* with him. Gen. 24. 31.

7. Tell Him, it is infinite mercy that now and then thou feeleſt his *quickning*, though thou ſhouldſt never enjoy his *comforting*, his raviſhing preſence any more while thou liveſt in the world; Nay, there's alwayes ſome comfort in the ſenſe of his quickning preſence; Nay, he knows the poſture of thy ſoul to be in ſome meaſure the ſame with that of *David's* 2. Sam. 15. 26. *if he thus ſay, I have no delight in thee,* (though that word break thy heart) *yet here am I,* abſolutly at his diſpoſe, he can do me no wrong, *let him do with me as it*

ſeemeth good unto him. God muſt be weary in delighting in himſelf, Son and Spirit, when he delights not in this frame, which is the work thereof; if the Heaven above were braſs ſure the earth below would be iron, if there were no yeildings in his heart towards thee, ſure there would be none in thy heart towards him, thou couldſt never delight thy ſelf in the Almighty, if he took no delight in thee; they draw back unto *perdition* in whom his ſoul takes no pleaſure, *Heb.* 10. 38, 39. my ſoul ſaith he, loathed them, and their ſoul abhored me. *Zech.* 11. 8.

CASE XVIII.

Fear of unſerviceableneſs.

Fear of unſerviceableneſs.

AND yet a generous, a noble minded Chriſtian may be ready to ſay; all this cannot, ought not, fully to ſatisfie me, though the Lord admit me to much ſweet ſecret comunion with him (for which I can never be ſufficiently thankful) yet if he will not honour me ſo as to uſe me, and make me ſome way *ſerviceable* in my generation, this is for a lamentation and ought to be ſo unto me; and this is that I fear, that I ſhall prove but a dry tree, an empty

empty vine, bring forth no Fruit, do no good, neither find God working with me, nor be admitted to work with God, as 'tis ſaid of *Jonathan*, there ſhall not one hair of his head fall to the ground, *for he hath wrought with God this day*, 1. Sam. 14. 4. ſo doth every good warriour, every good Magiſtrate, and that's his greateſt comfort, Glory and ſafety, that he works with God, and God with them.

So *Paul* ſpeaks of himſelf and his fellow-labourers in the Miniſtry; *we then as workers together with him*, 2. Cor. 6. 1. But I fear I muſt never have the honour of that Title whatever my calling or capacity be, for it was not only his way in the old Teſtament, in the old Temple, but 'tis threatned in that Goſpel-viſion, *Ezek.* 44. 10, 11, 12, *&c.* That they who have ſtrayed far from him in times of temptation and epedemical Apoſtacy, ſhall bear their iniquity, their ſhame, and their abominations, (that is, ſome ſad reward and remembrancer thereof) and though admitted to the injoyment of many precious priviledges, yet muſt be baniſhed from the *neareſt approaches*, and *higheſt ſervices*, 'tis expreſt in the ſtrain and ſtile of the Old Teſtament; but is intended and

calculated for the Meridian of the new, and reaches not only Miniſters but all Profeſſors, all thoſe who are now the royal *Prieſt-hood*, 1 Pet. 2: 5, 9. *Rev.* 1. 5. and even amongſt good people, where is the man that is able to bear, being laid aſide and caſt off at the end of the ſtage, and to ſee freſh inſtruments choſen? what is it elſe imbitters ſo many ſpirits? and how ſhould'ſt thou be able to bear ſuch a tryal, either to fall from thy ſtanding, or do no good though continued in it, which of the two is the worſt by far: if ever this be thy caſe, Go order thy cauſe before him and fill thy mouth with *Arguments*, Though guilty of many ſtrayings from him.

See a ſad inſtance, 2 Chr. 25. 10, 13.

Arguments 1. Tell Him, thou perceiveſt it is not his will to deſtroy thee; if the Lord were pleaſed to kill thee, he would not have accepted an offering at thine hand, nether would he have ſhewed the all theſe things which he locks up from ſo many thouſands, and yet hath acquainted thee with them; thou canſt look him in the face, and ſay with the Prophet, *Hab.* 1. 12. *Art not thou from everlaſting O Lord my God, mine holy one, I ſhall not die:* Thou art the King eternal, and ſwayed not by time-accidents, but

Judg. 13. 23.

but by eternal conſiderations, thou changeſt not, and therefore I am not, I ſhall not be conſumed. Now then, Mal. 3. 6

2. Plead upon this ground and tell him, it is not ſo much for his *honour* only to keep the alive and make no uſe of thee; to preſerve thy ſoul, only as ſalt to preſerve the body, but do no ſervice; and if thou had'ſt help to do all that is commanded or can be expected of thee in thy place, is not thy Soul prepared to ſay, thou art but an *unprofitable ſervant*, Luke 17. 10. and never open thy mouth more by way of boaſting.

3. Minde him, that through his grace ſome ſad ſinners have proved moſt ſhining Saints, as in Scripture the children of women long barren have proved moſt eminent Inſtruments in Church and Common-wealth, of *Sarah*, *Iſaac*; of *Rachel*, *Joſeph*; of *Hannah*, *Samuel*; of *Manoahs* wife *Sampſon*; of *Eliſabeth*, *John* the Baptiſt; ſo amongſt ſinners, ſome that came in late into the vineyard, have plied their hands, and laboured more abundantly than they who were admitted before them: *Abimaaz* outruns *Cuſhi* (though he ſet out after him) and comes to *David* before him; and if ever a ſoul had need to redeem the 1 Cor 15. 9, 10.

time,

time, and fetch up what hath been loſt thou much more; and it will be to the praiſe of the glory of his Grace if he will help the ſo to do.

4. He knows that thou art now in a way of purgation and purification, and therefore it will be no diſhonour to him, now to uſe and imploy thee; nay he hath publiſhed it by the pen of his Apoſtle, that if a man *purge himſelf from theſe* (from the pollutions wherewith he hath been defiled) *he ſhall be a veſſel unto honour, ſanctified and made meet for the Maſters uſe; and prepared unto every good work,* (and thou aſkeſt no more,) 2. *Tim.* 2. 21. They who will not be reduced and made better, are often againſt their wills reduced and made lower, if not utterly caſhiered and diſmiſſed from further ſervice, but he that can plead the former may ſcape the later, as having now (through Grace) prevented the Lord, and ſaved him a labour.

5. Aſk Him if he did not *call* thee & lead thee to thy preſent ſtation, and will he now leave thee, to wither like a bulruſh in the mire, and vaniſh away in utter unſerviceableneſs? Who in a way of God can take unto himſelf the honour of Magiſtracy or Miniſtry, or any

any other way of uſefullneſs, *but he that is called of God* thereunto, *as was Aaron*, Heb. 5. 4. and yet thou deſireſt to be prepared to juſtifie him, though he proceed with thee as with *Eli*'s houſe, 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. *Wherefore the Lord God of Iſrael ſaith, I ſaid indeed that thy houſe, and the houſe of thy fathers ſhould walk before me: but now the Lord ſaith, be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that deſpiſe me ſhall be lightly eſteemed*; and thou haſt been too too often guilty of deſpiſing him.

6. Ask if he remember not how thou didſt often beg him never to truſt thee with advantages, with opportunities; unleſs withal he would give thee an heart to be faithful and fruitful in the improvement of them? Haſt thou not prayed (upon theſe terms) even againſt power and riches? leſt thou ſhouldſt be full and deny him, and ſay, *who is the Lord?* Haſt thou not been in this regard more afraid of riches, honour, greatneſs, than their contraries? yea ſometimes more afraid to live than to die; fearing leſt thou ſhouldſt not live unto him and to his ſervice? loath therefore haſt thou been to launch into the world again, after thou haſt been laid up by ſome ſickneſs. prov. 30. 8, 9.

7. How

7. How often haſt thou deſired ſince thou caneſt into the road of opportunities (in ſence and fear of unanſwerableneſs) rather to be removed than to fill up a room, and cumber the ground, and keep out others that might be more uſeful? and will he neither remove thee nor improve thee? neither cut thee down nor make thee fruitful?

Laſtly, Tell him plainly that paſſage in *Rom.* 5. 20. *Where ſin abounded grace did much more abound*, makes thee (being now found of him in a way of Faith and Repentance) not only not to fear extraordinary judgements, but even to look for extraordinary Favours; more love unto him, more Humility, more Holineſs, more watchfulneſs; and by theſe, more than ordinary uſefullneſs and Serviceableneſs in thy Generation, let him put or place thee where he pleaſeth: it is not his diſpoſition *to upbraid*, Jam. 1. 5. and therefore thou expecteſt he ſhould give *Liberally* of that wiſdom to thee, which may make the ſerviceable in thy ſtation.

CASE XIX.

Fear of being caſt off at laſt.

Fear of being caſt off at laſt

AFTER all this there may yet be a ſecret *Achan* in the Camp, which

which will be fingering the Accursed thing (unbelief,) a *Jonah* in the Ship, which will be raising new tempests, and that is a Fear lest God at last should turn his back upon thee, & thou be found amongst those that are Deceivers of their own Souls, being *turned into hell*, when it seems their looks (though nothing else) were towards Heaven; if ever this be thy case, hye thee to God presently, Go fill thy mouth with *Arguments.* Psal. 9. 17.

Arguments

1. Complain against thine own heart, so far as there is any mixture of unbelief in this Fear; confess that as to God it is an unworthy jealousie, and thou hast need with *Gideon* to cry to him for *mercy*, to pray that his *anger* may not wax hot against thee, for asking him so many signs, considering how often the fleece hath been wet and the floor dry already to give thee satisfaction. *Judg.* 6. 39.

Yet when thou lookest downward there is misery enough, and matter enough to justifie all thy Fears, and to move him to pardon, yea to sanctifie them unto thee, especially considering that thy *All* is at the stake, and that it is Eternity, Eternity, Eternity that is before thee; that vast Gulf of Eternity; and if thou art mistaken in thy confidence

confidence, thou art loſt irrecoverably to all Eternity: this may move him to pity rather than to anger; and to ſay to them that are of *a fearful heart*; *Be ſtrong, fear not, behold your God will come and ſave you*, Iſa. 35. 4.

2. For thy further Eſtabliſhment aſk him if he have not made all as ſure as Grace can make it? yea, it is there-
2 Sam. 23. 5. fore *all of grace*, that the promiſe might *be ſure to all the ſeed*, Rom. 4, 16. as ſure as infinite Love, infinite Wiſdom, infinite Power, can make it, and thou dreadeſt it as thou doſt Hell it ſelf, to make the God of all Grace and Truth a Liar, 1 *John.* 5. 10. to add to all thy other evils that grand abomination of *unbelief*, which puts more affronts and ſcorn upon him than all other ſins whatſoever.

2. Aſk if all the ſpirits of juſt men now made perfect will not confeſs the
Act. 13. 34. Ruth. 3. 10. Mercies of Chriſt to be ſure Mercies, and that he (as *Boaz* ſaith of *Ruth*) *ſhewed* them *more kindneß in the latter end, than at the beginning*, and that
Joh. 13. 1. *having loved his own which were in the World he loved them to the end*, and reſerved the beſt Wine for the laſt, *the laſt Grapes* (eſpecially in Chriſts vineyard) *yeild the ſweeteſt wine*; David makes

makes it obvious to any mans obſervation, *Pſal.* 37. 37. *Mark the perfect man and behold the upright*: (he goes current for a perfect man) *for the end of that man is peace.* And even a *Balaam* is forced to acknowledge it, that there is a deſireableneſs in the death, in the later end of the righteous, Numb. 23. 10. *Let me dye the death of the Righteous, and let my later end be like his.*

4. If yet thou feareſt as to thine own particular, as if the holy Ghoſt (who makes it his trade *to help infirmities*, and hath helped thee in thine all thy life long) ask if he will not then help thee when thou art moſt infirm? Nothing but a lump of infirmity and weakneſs? ſurely then, in thy greateſt need he will not fail thee. Rom. 8. 26.

Laſtly, Tell him, he knows why thou would'ſt ſo fain be with him in his Heaven, not becauſe thou fancieſt it a *Turkiſh Paradiſe*, or a *Paganiſm Eliſium*, abounding with Carnal or Corporal pleaſures; not only becauſe thou would'ſt eſcape everlaſting burnings (though he himſelf cannot blame thee for aiming at this, ſeeing he commands thee by all means poſſible to endeavour it;) But thy ſoul longs inceſſantly to go to Heaven, becauſe Heaven is the Land of *Hallelujahs*, Act. 2. 40 2 Pet. 1. 10.

Hallelujahs, and thou would'ſt fain be thankful, really thankful?

Heaven is the Land of Love, and thou wouldſt fain take thy fill of love, in loving and being beloved; in loving as thou art loved, without intermiſſion, without interruption, eternaly, and ſo be ever with Chriſt, which is by much *far better*, *Phil.* 1. 23. All theſe meet daily with a thouſand hindrances and incumbrances, which make thee ſick of earth and ſigh for Heaven, Groaning within thy ſelf with that bleſſed Apoſtle (who had once been there) 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. *For in this we groan earneſtly, deſiring to be cloathed upon with our houſe which is from Heaven.*

Hinderances and Incumbrances, which make a Hell above ground, not to be endured by any honeſt heart, and how much more intollerable then is the nethermoſt Hell, for there is never a nook, never a corner in it, where a poor ſinner might weep eternally, without blaſpheming, without hearing blaſphemies, without hating of God, without ſinning againſt him: He knows how often thou haſt told him, if there were, how much more quietly thou couldſt accept of the puniſhment of thine iniquity there, and there juſtifie him, and there bewail thy

thy folly and madness, and lament the loss of him for evermore. But to lose him and all love to him, and to be sinning against him eternally, this cannot be contented to, but by a Creature damned already, though above ground; nothing therefore short of Heaven can satisfie thee or ought so to do; and if upon these Terms thou canst not be admitted into his Rest, sure he will have but little, who went *thither to prepare a Place for thee.* Joh. 14. 2, 3.

This *Hope* then *we have as an Anchor of the Soul both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the Vail, whither the Fore-runner is for us entered, even Jesus made an High Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec,* Heb. 6. 19, 20. Thus *Building up your selves in your most holy Faith, and Praying in the Holy Ghost, keep your selves in the Love of God, looking for the Mercie of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal Life,* Jude 20, 21.

CASE XX.

Intercession for others: With Complaints concerning many Things which are amiss in our Times.

BUT Hast thou not a Good Mind (before parting) to speak a Good Word Intercession for others,

Word for others alſo? This hath been conſtantly the way of the Spirit of Adoption. When *David* came before the Lord upon the ſaddeſt Occaſion that ever his Soul was acquainted with when He was moſt full of his own Concernments, and had moſt cauſe of Fear that his appearing for others might do harm rather than good, yet then he ventures to drop a word for *Sion*, and remembers *Jeruſalem* amidſt his *greateſt grief* as well as he prefers her before his *chiefeſt joy*. *Do good in thy Good Pleaſure unto Sion, build thou the walls of Jeruſalem.* What his Sins had weakened, and attempted to Ruine, He endeavours to ſtrengthen and Repair by his Prayers, and ſeldom do ye ſee him riſe from off His knees before He had pleaded the Church's Cauſe, & oftentimes he makes that his only errand, as you may find by ſeveral *Pſalms*, pen'd for no other purpoſe.

Pſal. 137. 6. Pſal. 51. 18.

Nay, many times the beſt Pleaders feel not their hearts warm in the work, till they come out of the narrow circle of their own perſonal Concernments, & launch into the buſineſs of the body of Chriſt, and then are their Hearts fixed by the ſpirit of Grace and Supplication, the great Soul of that Body.

But

But now adays many praying persons can find little to say, unless by way of complaint concerning the publick; Be it so, you were told at the first that the word here translated *Arguments* signifies *Complaints* also; if then thou canst make the Cause of the publick thine own (as thou oughtest to do,) Go order thy cause before him, and fill thy mouth with *Arguments.*

1. Plead for his poor *Persecuted* people all the world over, ask if it be nothing to him to see the blood of the Martyrs of Jesus Christ, spilt like water upon the ground even to this day, in *Piedmont*, *Poland* and other places? are not the eyes of his glory weary of such sad spectacles? ask if there be not with them, even with them sins against the Lord, and if the Rage wherewith they have slain his Servants reach not up to Heaven, 2 *Chron.* 28. 9. it was wont so to do in former times? Complain that their bones are scattered at the Graves Mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth Wood upon the Earth, *Psal.* 141. 7. and ask if he look not on to require it? When shall the Earth disclose her blood, and no more cover her slain? *Argument* Isa. 26. 21.

2. Complain that there's nothing visible

sible towards a Reckoning with that drunken *beast*, which makes it self drunk with the blood of the Saints as with sweet wine; nay he seems of late to blow upon some enterprizes level'd at them, and to shine upon the Counsels of the wicked. Ask him when shall those *fourty and two moneths* be expired (for men miss it in their calculations and conjectures) when shall the mountains flow down at his presence (and the Seven Hills amongst the rest) when shall the powers of the Earth melt like Wax before the fire, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of the whole earth? *Why is his Charet so long a coming, why tarry the Wheels of his Charet?* Mind him that the harvest of the Earth is not only ripe, but even dried up and withered, ἐξηράνθη ὁ θερισμὸς τῆς γῆς *Rev.* 14. 15. compared with *Matth.* 13. 6. and 21. 19. A wonderfull expression of His Patience; but how long Lord Holy and True? when, oh when shall it yet once be! Ask Him if His soul takes any pleasure in them, that he thus long continues them.

Rev. 17. 6. Though the thousand years *Rev.* 20. 2. were granted to begin at the time of *Constantines* Degree, *An. Dom.* 311. and to expire, at the rising of the *Ottoman* Family, *An.* 1310. and the Devil then let loose again, yet must he have no long time to play reekes in the world, as appears by comparing, *Rev.* 20. 7. with the 10. *ver.* See Dr. *Hamond* in Loc.

2. Cut scores with the poor *Jews*, we are many a prayer behind hand with them; when shall the Redeemer come

unto

unto *Sion*, and turn away ungodlineſs from *Jacob*? when will he *lift up his feet to thoſe perpetual deſolations*, to the Mountains that have laid *always* waſt (he ſpeaks one would think, as if he himſelf thought the time very long) when ſhall the receiving of them be as life from the dead? tell him, we hear as yet of no noiſe, no ſhaking at all in the valley of dry bones, no coming together of the bones, bone to his bone; and yet how much of the Glory of God, and good of men; how much of that treaſure is imbarqued in this bottom? when ſhall Saints and Nations be *Synonyma's* and *Termini convertibiles*, as is implyed, *Rev.* 15. 3. King of Nations, and yet 'tis tranſlated, King of Saints, as if at that time Saints and Nations ſhould be of an equal extent and latitude.

Rom. 11. 26. Pſal. 74. 3. Ezek. 38. 8. Rom. 11. 15. Ezek. 37. 7. ὁ Βασιλεὺς τῶν ἁγίων

4. Beg a watering upon his *Plantations* abroad; there are many Precious ſouls worthy of thy remembrance, many poor ſouls that need it, many praying ſouls to whom thou oweſt it, many pleading ſouls who will repay it; therefore you that have eſcaped the miſeries that have befallen others, remember the Lord (his concernments and people) afar off, and let *Jeruſalem*

come into your mind, *Jer.* 51. 50. Many have friends and relations with whom they enjoy little Communion in this world, pray ye may meet at the right hand of Christ, never to part in the next.

5. Complain unto Him of that spirit of *prophaneſs*, which yet domineers in our Lands, and over the generallity of our Nation, though he hath loved our Nation, and hath wrought ſuch Salvations for us, as can no where be matched, ſave in the ſtory of *Iſrael*; he hath given ſome into our hands, others under our feet, (I need not name them) ſure of all the world *Engliſh-men* are under the moſt powerful obligations unto holineſs; but alas, how ill do we requite the Lord, like a fooliſh people and unwiſe: Oh pray that Chriſt may indeed
Iſa. 52. 15. ſprinkle many Nations, and ours among the reſt in a ſpecial manner, with His blood and Spirit, that we may yet become *a peculiar people zealous of good works.*

6. Preſs Him to caſt out that *unthankful* ſpirit, wherewith ſo many are poſſeſſed even to a ſtrange degree of diſtemper that hath befallen us, which is ſaid of Egypt, the Lord hath mingled a Perverſe Spirit in the midſt of us, which cauſeth us *to err in every work as a drunken*

drunken man staggereth in his vomit, Isa. 19. 14. We are ready to reel and dash one against another continually, many abusing, many dispiseing all their present mercies, though but a few years ago, the crums of that loathed *Manna*, which now fall from our tables would have relished as most precious priviledges, worthy to be purchased at the rate of the utmost hazards and hardships; peevishness keeps many from praying for their Magistrates, and how can they look for good by them who sin in ceasing to pray for them, 1 *Tim.* 2. 1, 2. what would that blessed man if now alive say unto us, who so exhorted in *Nero*'s time, and because he knew men would be backward, he backs his commands with *Arguments* from the *benefite*, that redounds to the Church & from the *acceptableness* of this practise to God, *making supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks for all men, for Kings and for all that are in authority.* 1 Tim 2. 1. 2.

7. Ask when that unclean spirit of *error, blasphemy* and *delusion*, shall have its pass (according to his promise, *Zach.* 13. 2.) and be sent packing out of our Lands? Some, not of the worst people, simple souls (ἄμαχοι, as the Apostle calls them) have been misled Rom. 1 :8.

hereby; and he hath ſaid, *They that erred in ſpirit ſhall come to underſtanding, and they that murmured ſhall learn doctrine, Iſa.* 29. 24. they that erred, & they that murmured, the holy Ghoſt ranks them together, as being of one feather; it ſeems there is no ſmal affinity between the erroneous and the murmurers; but pity and pray for thoſe who like *Abſolom's* two hundred, follow their leaders in the ſimplicity of their hearts.

8. Bewail before Him, that woſull, wilfull, affected, Soul-murdering *Ignorance*, which as a vail covers ſo many hearts and faces, notwithſtanding all the means of light afforded us: there are indeed too too many dark places even in all the three Nations (in *Ireland* eſpecially) which are full of cruelty; but alas how many are there in the midſt of our *Goſhens* without Chriſt, without God in the world, meer Atheiſts, as the Apoſtle calls them, *Epheſ.* 2. 12. ἄθεοι ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, without any inward appretiative acquaintance with God, without any powerful, experimental, practical knowledge at all.

Iſa. 29. 18. When ſhall the day dawn, wherein the *deaf ſhall hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind ſee out of obſcurity*

ſcurity, and out of darkneſs? when will the Lord again make bare his holy arm? and ſpread forth his hands in the midſt of our Congregations (to pull in Souls unto himſelf) as he that ſweemeth ſtretcheth forth his hands to ſweem? *Iſa.* 52. 10.

When will he ſmell in our Aſſemblies a ſavour of reſt, and take pleaſure in our ſolemn meetings, as in the days of old? how long ſhall all his poor Miniſters complain, that converſion work hath a ſtop put to it every where? *Gen.* 8. 21.

9. Deal earneſtly with him about the compounding and compremiſing of our *differences*, diſtances and deviſions, which have given ſuch a wound to religion, opned ſuch a gap to Satan, which every one complains off, and yet helps to widen; beg that all the children of light may *walk* more *in the light as he is in the light, and then ſhall we have fellowſhip one with another*, 1 *John* 1. 7.

Beg he would put it into the hearts of all His people, to imitate that good pattern, *Judg.* 1. 1, 2, *&c.* which doubtleſs waits for a Spiritual accompliſhment as well as all other things which happened to them in figure. *Judah* hath the priority given him, *jure devino*, by an Oracle from Heaven, *Judah ſhould go up firſt, Behold I have delivered the Land into*

into his hand, and yet hereupon he despiseth not the aid and assistance of his brethren but invites *Simeon* his brother to engage with him against the common adversary and promiseth the like assistance unto him, and speeds never a whit the worse for it, but the better; God is so far from being offended with this practise that he blesseth it exceedingly, and delivered up the common enemy into their hands; thus would he deal by us as to our spiritual enemies, could we unite to engage against them, and leave our pickerings and carnal contendings to overtop and Supplant and impose upon one another.

10. Lastly, Prefer one Bill of complaint more in a case which few think of, notwithstanding all our Boastings and pretensions to a through reformation, and that's this: Few men now adays do honour the Lord with their substance, few look at this as a duty to consecrate any part of their gain unto the Lord, or of their substance to the Lord of the whole earth, but carry it

Prov. 3. 9, 10.

Donum est integritas animi. God by exacting this Tribute tries the sincerity of our love, faith, obedience; when the *Israelites* would not endure the sight of him, who came to demand the Tribute, it was a sure sign of their total and final revolt and defection, it was then high time for *Rehoboam* to get him gone.

it as if they were turned *Independents* indeed, and did not depend no not upon God Himself, or as if God Himself had lost his propriety, and there were now no rent-peny, no acknowledgment due unto him, save such an one as costs us nothing; Surely God from the begining reserved and claimed a part due to himself, who gave the whole, and whatever there was besides; this also was in the sacrifices of *Cain* and *Abel*, an acknowledgement that God hath a right in every man's goods; afterwards he publisht and put in his claim more peremptorly, *Exod.* 22. 29. *Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits and of thy liquors: the first born of thy sons shalt thou give unto me. Non tardabis*, Thou shalt not delay, this implies an antient usage, this is no new thing, but a Law of confirmation, and yet this was before the *Levitical* institution, *Lev.* 27. 30. *And all the tythe of the Land, whether of the seed of the Land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lords: it is holy unto the Lord.* It is the Lord's, it is his already, and had been so from the beginning of the world, and he now appoints the *Levite*, the stranger, the widow, and the Fatherless to be his rent-gatherers or Receivers General, *Deut.* 26.

1. King 12. 18 And 'tis obſerv'd, that Chriſt tho' he reprov'd all ſins, puniſhed none, but that of *ſacrilege* and *prophanation* of holy things; what will he do, when he comes as a judge to call us to an account for all our receipts and returns.

Deut. 26. 12, 13. *When thou haſt made an end of tything all the tythes of thine increaſe, the third year, which is the year of tything, and haſt given it unto the Levite, the ſtranger, the fatherleſs, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled.*

Then thou ſhalt ſay before the Lord thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine houſe, and alſo have given them unto the Levite, and unto the ſtranger, to the fatherleſs, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments, which thou haſt commanded me: I have not tranſgreſſed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them.

'Tis due to him, *quaſi Regale vectigal*, as a royal revenue, and he doth *proprio jure credere*, (ſaith *Calvin*) when he thus diſpoſeth of it; But where's the defect, the default (may ſome ſay) where's the irregularity to be complained of? I wiſh trial were made whether it may not be proved (if the point were well ſtudied, but I ſhall only hint it) that the * tenth part (or other proportion) of every mans increaſe, acquiſitions, improvements, and incomes,

* *Unuſquiſque de*

is

quali ingenio aut artificio vivit, de ipſo decimam Deo in pauperibus vel in eccleſiis donet, Aug. *de reſt. Catbol. converſ.* To. 9. *Fol.* 250. Thus did the primitive Chriſtians, *Modicam unuſquiſque ſtipem aponit*, &c.

is due unto the Lord even to this day: I am far from thinking or ſaying that it is due unto the Miniſtry or to any ſort of men, but that it is due and ought to be dedicated to God, and to the everlaſting Prieſthood of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by way of thankfull acknowledgment to God for the ſame, a tenth which even the Miniſters and the *Glebe* it ſelf ought to pay, and ſo ought to be expended in the ſupporting of publick worſhip, in the relieving of the poor at home and abroad, under the rage of perſecution in other Countries, and in the education of poor Children, the advancement of learning (that ineſtimable Jewel) and other pious uſes. And would every man that abounds make ſuch a Purſe, and account it *depoſitum pietatis*, as a ſacred Treaſury or Corban not to be opened but for pious uſes; how many neceſſitous parents, periſhing orphans, poor Aged people, Perſons Ruin'd by Fire, Shipwrack, or the like, might ſpeedily be relieved? There is no pious Perſon but judges ſomething due this way, and the *Quicquid Clerici habent, pauperum eſt*, Hier. In caſe of neceſſity, of extremity, God's Command makes relief due unto others, makes them owners, Maſters, of our ſuperfluities; not that they may take it by force, but that we muſt give freely. *Trappe* on *Prov.* 13. 27.

Hæc quaſi depoſita pietatis ſunt, nam inde non expulis, &c. ſed egenis alendis, humandiſque & pueris ac puellis ve ac parentibus deſtitutis, naufragis &c. Ter. Apolog.

the Holy Ghoſt calls even a man's Charity due debt, *Prov.* 3. 27. *Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it. Say not unto thy Neighbour, go and come again, and to Morrow I will give, when thou haſt it by thee,* verſ 28. What we call giving, God calls paying; What we call Charity He counts due Debt; all the queſtion is about the *Quantum* how much ought thus to be dedicated to God, and to fix it upon the tenth part, is neither Popiſh nor Legall, or Jewiſh, but a known Truth, or Duty long before the oldeſt of theſe was heard of in the World; This was no *natural* but an *adoptive* Child of *Moſes*, nor was it a Type or Ceremony, as Sacrificeing was; (which was alſo before the Law) for then there muſt be ſome ſpiritual ſubſtance typed out by it, but it was practiſed by the light of Nature and Law of Reaſon, Morall Law, and Law of Nations every where. Why elſe did *Abraham*, Gen. 14. 20. Pay Tythes to *Melchiſedec*, the great Repreſentee of Chriſt, who is brought upon the ſtage like a man dropt out of the Clouds, only to ſhaddow out Chriſt, as if he had neither Father nor Mother, Birth nor Death, *Heb.* 7. 2. And that they were paid as a due to the

Heb. 7. 6. δεδεκάτωκε τὸν Ἀβραάμ. He

the Priesthood of Christ (sustained then in a figure by *Melchisedec*) the seventh Chapter to the *Hebrews* proves abundantly, and that *Levi* himself who took Tythes, here payed them, and that *Levi* had only a Commission (*pro tempore*) to be God's Rent-gatherer and Receiver. They mistake that think the payment of the tenth part, was then first set on foot to defray the charges of that costly Worship, it was paid long before; *Abraham* is a full instance, four hundred and thirty years before the Law (as the Apostle observes upon another occasion, *Gal.* 3. 17.) and I would know whether that were Will-worship in him, or what Law he hath observed, what rule he walked by therein? *Abraham* would not take a threed or a shoe latchet to himself, but took care God might have *his part*, and then returned the rest (though now become his by conquest) to the former owner, but if he gave the Tythe only by courtesie, and not Divine Authority, it proves not the thing in hand, the Excellency of *Melchisedec*'s Priesthood above the *Levitical*: for surely that had Authority to take them, and so had *Melchisedec* pay'd the tenth part to him long before the Law, and *Levi* had only a Commandment

Tythed Abraham which shews he had Authority to take Tythes, and seems to subject *Abraham*, to a necessity of paying of them.

Abraham gave ἀκροθίνια, the very top and Chiefest part of all *Heb.* 7. 4.

Cain like a Churle gives the refuse, the lean stuff, he brought of his fruits.

Abel like a Prince, his first fruits, the best and fattest, *Gen.* 4. 4

Commandment to warrant his taking of the Tythes, *Heb.* 7. 5. The *jus decimandi* being long before vested in another Priest-hood, and only *pro tempore*, lent to that of *Levi*.

5. *Adam* began this Acknowledgement in the Sacrifices, with the Skins of which God clothed him, *Gen* 3. 21.

But this was only a tenth of the Spoiles taken in War, may some say, what say ye then to that engagement of *Jacob*, Gen. 28. 22. *Of all that thou shalt give unto me I will surely give the tenth unto thee, Et hoc tam pro se quam pro posteris suis vovet*, he binds his posteritie hereunto as well as himself, saith *Mercer in Loc.* Methinks he speaks of it as a duty that he had been Catechised and trained up in the knowledge of. He had the direction of the Spirit for it, saith *Calvin*, and why not also the instruction of his Ancestors? For *Abraham* practised it before him: And yet this good man though he promised it so *surely*, was not so careful and punctual in his performance as he should have been, and his omission of it at his return, (when hasting to pacifie his brother, he pluck away a good fleece from his estate, before the decemation thereof according to his vow) seems to be the cause why the Angel contended so sore with him, that he put him to his tears and prayers, as

This duty was corrupted by *Cain*, reformed by *Abel*, practised by *Noah*, *Job*, &c. The Answer to Mr. *Seldens* History of Tythes, endeavours to prove that *Abraham* gave the tenth not of the Spoils

Hosea

Hosea tells us, *Chap.* 12. 4. And though he blest him, yet he sent him limping to his Grave, *Gen.* 35. 1. God calls him to perform his vow, and whether he payed it into the hands of *Heber*, or *Isaac* the head of the Family, *vel potius consecrârit in usus sacros*, let it a part for pious uses, 'tis all one to us, here's something belonging to the Law of Nature, or Morall Law for our instruction, and imitation, nor doth he engage upon condition, the particle עד rendred, *if*, Ver. 20. *until*, ver. 15. *when*, Numb. 36. 4. *surely*, Prov. 3. 34. This takes away the great objection, if it were a duty according to the Moral Law, or Law of Nature, he would have engaged absolutely, and so you see he did, notwithstanding that in the Text. Thus it was before the Law Ceremonial, and Christ approves it, *Matth.* 23. 23. and affirms that dedicating a part to charitable uses, sanctifies the whole, as the first Fruit Sanctified the Lump, *Luk.* 11. 41, 42. & 12. 33. And finds no fault with the Pharisee for his Practice, *Luk.* 18. 12. for his giving up of a tenth part of all that he possessed to pious uses, but for his trusting in it: nor were the tenths all of them consumed by Christ's *Consumatum est*,

only, but of all he had, however it is a good precedent for Souldiers: and for *Jacob*, He had some sufficient warrants, for his resolution. *Non quod suo arbitrio Deum coluerit, nam directio spiritus vitæ legis scripta fuit.* Cat.

but he teacheth us even to the end of the World, *to give unto God the things that are God's*, Mark 12. 17. and both we and all that we have are his, 1 *Cor.* 29. 14. Though he is pleased to accept a final part in lieu of the whole.

Sacrum Deo non sine insigni in eum injuriâ ad profanos usus applicatur, Cal. *inst.* l. 3. C. 7. §. 1.

And plain it is, that there is such a thing as *Sacriledge* now in the days of the Gospel, and I fear many more are guilty thereof than are aware of it; nay, well were it, if they were not most guilty, who seem most to abhor *Idols* thou that *abhorrest Idols*, dost thou commit *Sacriledge*, Rom. 2. 22. *Concedimus Deo*, says *Magna Charta*, when it speaks of Seperating the tenth part to holy uses which part was called by the Antients, *Dei census*, God's Rent, nor hath God forfeited his Right, because of mans abuse or superstition. I think also there must be some Rule of proportion for that laying by in store commanded by the Apostle 1 Cor. 16. 2. *Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come,* (according to *Deut.* 16. 10.) *According as the Lord thy*

ad successit in eorum decimarum, Grotius *in Loc.*

Origen who flourished An. Chr. 227. Mentions the Payment of the tenth part, recalled by *Urban*, which was as soon as any had a propriety of estate, till then believers in many places had a community of goods, because of the rage of persecution, but not in places where they were more free.

thy God hath blessed thee in some due proportion. Now if there be no rule for the quantity, a large heart may lay by too much and defraud his Relations or other occasions, a narrow heart will be sure to lay by too little, and so be guilty of Sacriledge by alienating that which is due to God, to whom *Jure Coronæ*, besides Homage and fealty, service and fidelity, we owe an Honorary Tribute, though no subsidiary Rent, for that he needeth not: But this he requireth, and little comfort shall they have who deny it to him.

This (though far too little for the point) may seem too much in this place, but if the Lord would set on the sence of this duty upon the hearts and Consciences of professors, and take them off from their subterfuges, and Cavils, and Evasions, how soon would there be a Sacred Bank, a stock raised, a Temple-theasury filled, to answer all religious occasions, to give a speedy relief to the necessities of Saints abroad, at home, who starve many times while the Grass is growing, while the Alms are a gathering.

The poor the persecuted, the widow, fatherless, and stranger, these are Gods publicans, to gather this rent, Revenue, Custom due unto him, his collectors, and porters to carry it into his theasury

How would this roll away our reproach of being *Solifidians*, and make the Gospel vie for fruitfullness in good

of Heaven, and there you will find it, *Luke.* 16. 9.

works, with Popiſh Charity and blind devotion, *Tit.* 3. 8. let them who have believed in God, *be careſull to maintain good works.* How would it cut off occaſions from the fleſh, which craves and calls for all, and conſumes more upon ſome one luſt, than all a man's graces ever coſt him: How would it bring a bleſſing and prove a hedge about all the reſt of the Eſtate, like *Hannah*'s loaf which was lent to God, 1 *Sam.* 2. 20, 21. He gave her back five for one, and ſo will he do by every one that ventures with him, will ye prove him, *Mal.* 3. 1. do but try me ſaith he in this one particular, but it is a ſnare for a man to devour that which is *ſanctified*, Prov. 20. 25. that which is and ought to be *ſeparated* from common uſes: men rob God, *Mal.* 3. 8. and put him to ſtrain for his own, and he doth it many times to their ſorrow, Hoſ. 2. 8. 9. *For ſhe did not know that I gave her Corn, and Wine, & Oyl, and multiplied her Silver and Gold which they prepared for Baal*, they waſted all upon their luſts. 10. *Therefore will I return and take away my Corn in the time thereof; and my Wine in the ſeaſon thereof, and will recover my Wool, and my flax, (given) to cover her nakedneſs. Si in decemam non dederis, tu*

An ancient Profeſſor, after he had heard this point preſſed in publick told me it had been his Practiſe above 30. years, and that by the advice of the renowned

ad

ad decimam revoceris, (Aug. *de temp. Serm.* 219.) Because rich men will not give the tenth to God, God many times brings them to the Tenth of of what they had: God requires a seventh part of our time, because we have that meerly from his Bounty without our industry, but a tenth of our estate making a defalcation or allowance for our pains, and if he gives no increase he looks for nothing, now both as to the seventh part of our time, and the tenth part of our Estate, the Ceremonial and Levitical part being abolished, the moral use and equity remains to the Worlds end, all piety, justice, Gratitude requiring it, no Popish abuse ought to take away the use; and in all Nations in all ages, practising this * duty, though in a wrong way, will rise up in Judgement and condemn us, if we who have the right way neglect it.

Dr. *Usher*. And that he found much ease in giving, having allwise something by him which he looked on as none of his own, *Decimæ quaque vetares diis suis offerebant*, Paulus *Diacon. Abridgm. Fest.* All Nations by the instinct of nature, have practised it, or they learned it first from the people of God. They did

And who would repent his obedience hereunto when he comes to dye and to be torn away from all his outward enjoyments? then it is that mens consciences

vitè dividere though not *rectè offerre*, they admitted it as concluded on by an universal Parliament, though things are much varied by carrying far and long continuance, not answering to the Prototype and Original. * See Instances in Sir *H. Sp.* and Arguments from the New Testament in Dr. *Carleton*, Dr. *Sclater*, Mr. *Robe*

Mr. *Baxter*, which proves the duty here pleaded for more strongly than the due they contended for: though if God fails of his due his Servants cannot want theirs.

ces wring them, and make them fling away apace what they can grasp no longer. Oh, Then it is that their hearts die away with anguish and astonishment, to behold all the black *Items* of their expences, to think how they have served the Devil with their Estates and not God, to whom they are now a going to give an account of their stewardship when he will trust them no longer, they now feel the hook which they have swallowed, and would fain *disgorge* that which they are afrayed to *digest* in Hell.

But alas, we have gotten a cheap Religion, and therefore like it because it saves our purses, though not our Souls; what praying heart feels not cause to bewail it, to go to God about it, and to fill his mouth with *Arguments*. If we hold our peace mens land will cry against them, and the furrows thereof *complain*, Job 31. 38. The rust of their Riches shall be a witness against them, *Jam.* 5. 3.

I have only offered Hints to help on this blessed work of pleading and striving, and wrestling with God (with the arms of his own Spirit,) in Prayer, the decay and abatement whereof in our days is looked on as a sad symptom,

tom, and juſtly bewailed by the moſt ſpiritual profeſſors. But alas, how few ſtir up themſelves to take hold of God, *Iſa.* 64. 7. Now it muſt needs be granted, that the ſpirit of Adoption is the beſt Logician, the only One, both for *Invention* and *judgement*; it was he that taught *Ariſtotle* and others to reaſon with men, as well as *Job* and *Jeremy* and the reſt of the Saints, to reaſon out the caſe with God.

When he hath formed the Propoſitions according to his own Canons and principles of truth laid down in the Scriptures; and made the Aſſumption according to his office, which is to bear witneſs, 1 *John* 5. 6. and ſo hath made application of the propoſition to the perſon, to the poor ſolicitous ſoul. He will thence clearly and ſtrongly infer the Concluſion.

Yea, All His Arguments are highly Satisfactory, his Demonſtration irrefragable, his Dilemmas unavoidable; So that he convinces of righteouſneſs as well as of ſin, and ſubdues the Soul to the obedience of faith, it cannot turn from him; and in like manner doth he raiſe and refreſh it when it is weary? If we admit that diſtinction of a Mediation and Reconciliation, and of inter-

ceſſion, as that belongs to Chriſt, ſo this to the Spirit, not excluſively as to Chriſt but as to Angels and Saints departed, *Rom.* 8. 26. *The ſpirit it ſelf maketh interceſſion for us.*

And without breach of Charity I dare be bold to ſay, he hath none of that ſpirit within him, who can find no help by the conſcienti us and conſtant uſe of this way of pleading, if it be not to ſuppoſe an impoſſibility that any can conſcientiouſly uſe it without him; Nay, I dare ſay theſe conſiderations here hinted cannot miſs if rightly uſed: Only I would adviſe every one that would do anygood on't, to pick out and ſelect ſomething out of every Sermon they hear, to be repeated upon the knees in ſecret, which poſture I judge beſt, both for repeating and ſtudying any thing of this nature.

Bene orasse eſt, bene ſtudaſſe, orare eſſe eſt plus quam legiſſe, Alſted, *Theſaur. artis memoriæ.*

And let me add, If God will not hear thee, and anſwer thee upon theſe terms; If he do not put ſtrength into thee, if he be not content that faith ſhould overcome, then be thou bold to ſay, that all the Miniſters of His holy Goſpel are ſadly miſtaken in it and him, *Heb.* 10. 25. *Caſt not away therefore, this confidence, this priviledge of ſpeaking freely and pleading with your God, which,*

which hath great recompence of reward. He who ſo graciouſly anſwers pious ejaculations, *Nehem.* 2. 4. will undoubtedly anſwer the powerful *Expoſtulations* of Faith and *Pleadings* of his ſpirit; Forget not therefore how he calls his people to leave of their reaſonings with Satan, with fleſh and blood, and with their own evil hearts, and to come and reaſon out the matter with him, and what he promiſeth ſhall enſue thereon, *Iſa.* 1. 18. *Come now and let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord: though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as ſnow, though they be red like crimſon, they ſhall be as wooll.* And ſuch are many of our ſins, ſins of a deep dye, of a double tincture, relapſes are ſo.

But for thoſe who live not within the lines of this *Communication*, who come not within any of the *qualifications* here mentioned, who cannot own any of theſe Arguments, (if it be poſſible any ſuch ſhould have the leaſure and the patience to read them) The Lord have mercy upon them, they cannot *plead* and will be *preſſed* to death, for want of it.

Thus have I brought you to peep through the key-hole, through the hole of the door into the Tower of *David*, builded

builded for an Armoury, wherein there hang *a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men*; and if you have felt your beloved, putting in his hand by the hole of the door and touching your hearts, your Bowels have been moved for him and will be more and more; you'l not be at rest till you have been arguing out the matter with him in secret daily; And so the pouring in a dishful of water may help to set the Pump a going, and cause a pouring out of your hearts to some purpose, this poor thing may serve to do the work of a Gibeonite, help to hew wood and draw water for the Tabernacle & the Altar, it may help you with those Israelites
1 Sam. 7. 2. that *lamented after the Lord*, to draw water and to pour it out before the Lord.

And let me say assuredly that exercise will infinitly surpass in sweetness all sports and pastimes, all the theasures and glories of this world, all the delights of the sons of men, for 'tis the delight of the Sons of God; 'tis Heaven on Earth, Heaven on this side Heaven, and will undoubtedly convey you at last into the Heaven of Heavens, there to be extasied with joy and glory for evermore.

FINIS.

Spiritual Pleadings:

BEING, AN

IMITATION

AND

SUPPLEMENT,

OF

Mr. *Thomas Harriſon's* Book, Intituled, *Topica Sacra*, &c.

By Mr. *John Hunter* Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Ayre.*

KIRKBRIDE,

Printed By *ROBERT RAE*, 1712.

To the Much Honoured,

Samuel Moor, Provoſt,

DAVID FERGUSSON, } *Baillies*
FRANCIS MURDOCH, }

JOHN CRAUFORD, *Dean of Guild*,
THOMAS RICHARD *Theaſaurer*,
WILLIAM M'GAN, *Deacon Conveener*
And the Remanent Members of the Council of *ATRE*.

Much Honoured,

AS *Ye have a right unto my work in the miniſtry, ſo there is nothing more juſt, than that I ſhould dedicate this little eſſay to you, both upon the account of the reſpects I owe you, and the tender concern for your Everlaſting Intereſts, which I charge my ſelf to entertain.*

Some of your predeceſſours have made their Honour *to ſhine with an incomparable Luſtre, by familiarity with God, in which they were ſo eminent that it has embalmed their* Names *to all poſterity; and procured from all the Good and Wiſe,*

the

the beſt Judges *of* Honour, *a greater eſteem for the place of their reſidence and* Government, *than even all its other advantages could acclaim.*

Altho the withered ſtate of Religion, *all ranks of men have fallen into this day, render the practiſe of theſe before our time to our apprehenſion inimitable, and the ſlothfulneſs of deſpair ſtrikes us* Dead, *yet it becomes us to recall into our Memory their Noble* Example, *and ambition the imitation of it.*

The principal mean left us in reſerve is Prayer, *& indeed we can never either learn the art of it, nor practiſe it ſufficiently. The* Apoſtle *when he is concluding his directory to the* Epeſians *about the ſpiritual Armour, adds* praying with all prayer and ſupplication, &c. *ſignifying that as we muſt cut our way through to Heaven, ſo fighting on knees, and calling for help is the beſt method for aſſured ſucceſs, as it is uſual with Nations engaged in* War, *to call for and make a confederacy with others for auxiliary Forces againſt the Enemy, that without this might be too ſtrong: Theſe who have well underſtood this exerciſe, have done wonderful things, ſtormed Heaven, and got what they pleaſed: It was ſaid of* Luther, O! *what* Spirit, *what* Faith *was in his words he made*

made his requeſt with the reverence that was ſuitable to God, but with ſo great confidence and aſſurance, as convinced us he thought he ſpake with a Friend, a Father: In his Prayers he urged the promiſes in the Pſalms, *as one who was ſure all ſhould come to paſs that he ſought.*

Let me commend this Noble employment unto you or ſpeak well of it before you. It hath the good report of the Living *and the* Dead, *and hath been kind to all them in Heaven, and who are going to it will atteſt this, it hath been often-times to them as* Goliah's *Sword to* David, *none like it. I know nothing better, either for attaining or maintaining a frame of livelines, for often by hammering on our own hearts (when we could do no other thing) we have wrought a ſoftneſs into ſuch hard* Mettals: *ſo as they could be poured out before the Lord.*

And O! *how natively doth Heavenlyneſs vent it ſelf in exclamations of* Prayer, *both petitions and acknowledgments? This is it which gives a wonderful ſeaſoning to our ſperits, in the more proſperous circumſtances of Life, and proves a wind that blows the Veſſel toward the fair Havens, and when the Heart is oppreſt with grief, 'its in this it vents its trouble, and by doing ſo gets eaſe, for we*

muſt

must either have strong hands of resolution, to strangle our trouble within, or must impart it, and when we communicate it unto God, the weight of it is in a great measure gone. It is by this that what in a man unacquainted with God, is but like the groan of a beast in pain, becomes a breathing after God, and crying to heaven for help in the believer. Could we always keep up disposition for it, it would keep us up in all cases.

Let us endeavour to keep a constant tenderness of affections, by a sence of God and of our selves, in our guilt, need, and lyableness to trouble dwelling deep on our spirits, and let no breathing of the spirit allowed, even when we are not at all waiting for it, be neglected; but rather let all the impressions he at any time makes on our souls, be fed, nourished, and improven by carrying them unto God in prayer, which would at once both enlarge, and establish them there.

With an eye to the people of my charge I have compiled this little Essay, and I could not but think it proper, that since I am appointed to be an assistant to them in their publick devotion, I should set something before them to that purpose, which might be of more constant use, and so improve both their eyes and ears as instruments

Inſtruments of promoting ſeriouſneſs in Religion.

That ye may be exemplary in all the dutys of your profeſſion and your Special Character *that ye may have ſucceſs in the mannagement of the Government committed to you, and that thereby you may deſerve and have all the reſpect due to Honour and Religion meeting in one, that theſe may make the Influence of your exemple work more forcibly, and that ye may be happy in both worlds, ſhall be the Prayer of,*

Much Honoured,

Your moſt Humble and oblidged Servant in the Lord.

John Hunter.

Spiritual Pleadings.

AS Prayer is the native breathing of a ſpiritual Soul, without which it can no more live (and when it is well at it ſelf it thinks ſo) than we can ſubſiſt without the common Air, ſo it is one of the principal helps for maintaining Livelineſs in Religion, being that the freedom of that breathing often times fanns up a ſpark of life, which is ſo ſmal that its hardly percieveable, unto a flame; and as it is ſo neceſſary and uſeful to a Soul that has any acquaintance with God, ſo it may be ſaid to be more extenſive in its uſefulneſs than moſt of the Duties, as *Faith* is more than the reſt of the *Graces*; and it is a kind of ſupplement for many of the defects of both: for when we cannot act Love, Repentance and Conſecration of our ſelves to God, directly and in them-

ſelves, with any becoming diſtinctneſs & vigour, we may act them prayer-wiſe, requeſting that we may be brought up to them, and intermixing humble proteſtations againſt our being ſo far ſhort of what we ought to be, which ſhall be taken as ſome ſmall degrees of attaining unto that which we earneſtly would have.

Zech 12. 10. The Scripture tells us of a *Spirit of grace and ſupplications* to be poured out on the Church in good dayes, which I think imports not only liberal furniſhing of matter, but alſo frame for, and Art in wreſtling with God: This is a day wherein theſe things are as much wanting as they have been in moſt ages, and ſince, alas! we are not ſo happy, as to have our ſhowers from Heaven, which was the manner of wattering the land of *Iſrael*, we muſt do what we can to water our ground with the foot, as the *Egyptians* were ſaid to do in another ſence, by exciting and exerting all our giftes and graces in this noble and refreſhing exerciſe; not that any Art can prevail on God without the aſſiſtance of his own ſpirit, but that he who pleaſes to reward the skill and pains of the frugal husbandman, in doing his beſt upon his ſoil, with ſeaſonalble ſhowers and warm-

Deut. 11. 10, 11.

Iſa. 5. 10.

warmneſs for making his ſeed to grow, will countenance humble endevours in things of far greater concernment.

It is a ſhame that we are not often at more pains with our ſelves, both before our Prayers to melt our Souls into a tenderneſs of affection, or at leaſt to rouſe them into an earneſtneſs, and alſo in them, that we who ſtand like ſtatues, & whoſe words freez upon our lips, may ſpeak with a frame becoming God and everlaſting intereſts, and it muſt be confeſſed, a great part of our deadneſs in our performance is oweing to the ſtretching and dividing of our thoughts between what we are to ſay, (which is to ſeek) and the manner in which we would expreſs it, which impares the force of our Spirit, as by deviſion every thing grows leſs, whereas to have it well conſidered what we ſhould ſay in relation to our caſe, ere we come before God, might ſpare us much of the labour of ſeeking out our Matter, and our Arguments whereby we are to urge it, and reſerve moſt of our ſtrength for being laid out upon the ſerioufneſs of our Addreſſes.

I am not for being limited to things premeditated, and as little for refuſing helps, and indeed we not only ſee, but feel the truth of this, that our natural

ſcarcity of things that are heavenly, when we preſent our ſelves before God pleads that we ſhould value and gather them, eſpecially ſince the Scripture is a ſtore-houſe ſo wonderfully ſuited to wants of this kind, by Commands, Promiſes and Experiences: and yet the deſign of this little book is not ſo much to furniſh us with matter, as a way of mannaging it, after the manner of pleading, ſo as our matter may be the more adapted both to give flame to our affections, and maintain it in them.

The Occaſion of my venturing out upon this Work, was a ſight I got of a little Book, that's too little known for the excellency of it, called *Harriſon's Pleadings with God*, with which I was ſo much taken, that as I could not but deſire always to carry ſuch a Box of Perfumes about with me, ſo I was ſorry it was no larger, and therefore that I might have ſomething at hand, that might anſwer many moe Caſes than what are in it often occurring, I ſet my ſelf with the help of my deareſt acquaintance in our ſweeteſt and moſt ſolitary hours for Converſing about Eternal things, to carry on a little *Work* of this kind, in Imitation of that Savoury Writer: not as if I thought I could

ever

ever come up to or near him, for I really take him to be as inimitable, as almoſt any Writer upon Religion ever I read, but that I reſolved to entertain my own Spirit, with ſomething that ſhould ſavour of him, however far ſhort of my Exemplar I ſhould fall.

I look upon his Contrivance as fine, his Invention rich, his Fancie heated, but with Coals from the Altar, his Eloquence Sublime and Spiritual, his Arguments ſurprizeing, and his manner of urging them full of all that is ſoft and humble, the agreeable qualities of a Supplicant; and yet intermixed with the allowed confidence of a man that prayes not only from the ſence of need, but faith of Mercy. All the Objection that ſeems to ly againſt his Book, if it may be called an Objection, is that it can never go well away without a livelineſs of frame, and it is ſo formed out of, and attempered unto this, that it will hardly agree to the diſpoſitions that are Ordinary, and therefore it ſhall be of little uſe; But I judge it is anſwered when we ſay, that as it requires a ſpirituality of Frame, ſo it wonderfully contributes to the procuring of it; and indeed it muſt Inſenſibly carry a ſoul up unto it, (as an Inſtrument) if it

ſhall have but ſo much ſeriouſneſs, as can ſerve to take on better impreſſions.

Men gratefully have built a Monument,
To him, whoſe lucky Wiſdom did invent,
An eaſier way to mannage Trade,
Or whoſe adventerous Soul has made
The paſſage to its diſtant ſhore,
Threw all the Seas impervious before,
Both known and ſhort; I'le tell a Name
Which may with greater reaſon claim,
To be inſcrib'd within the breaſt,
Of all that are the Wiſe, of all that are the Beſt.
It's Harriſon, *which when I hear,*
Strikes with ſo grateſull ſound mine ear,
I find my Soul ev'n charm'd away
Into that Art, he did ſo wondrouſly diſplay,
It's He who has inſtructed us to Sail,
To Heaven, with a more auſpicious gale,
Or to hang out our flaging Sails and Watch,
Heaven's friendly wind, which waiting Souls may catch
Job's earneſt wiſh O might we deal,
With God, as one when he'd prevail,
Doth with his Neighbour, is allow'd,
For Harriſon *did So, and how we may hath ſhow'd*
By his rare art of Pleading he hath taught,
The Cottager to be a Patriot,
Who cannot ſtand and plead his Countreys cauſe
In that great meeting whence we have our Laws,
May plead for it with God upon his knees,
And vie with the Great Duke *in all his Victories.*
Yea while he doth requeſt he can command,
For God himſelf can ne're withſtand
Reaſons himſelf hath made, and faith inſpires,
They give Omnipotence to Saints deſires.

Job

Job 9. 32. *For he is not a Man that I should answer him, or that we should come together in Judgement.*

Job 16. 21. *O that one might plead for a man with God as a man pleadeth for his Neighbour!*

Job 23. 6, 7. *Will he plead against me with his great power, No but he would put strength in me.* There the Righteous might dispute with him, *So should I be delivered for ever from my Judge.*

The great God we have to do with, may be considered either under the awfull aspect of the absolute Lord of the World, as having both a Dominion of propriety over all the Creation, and a Dominion of Soveraignity over all the Rational Beings, Angels and Men, And there cannot be a more humbling thought than that which we have of him as King of Nations: for in this his Wisdom, Justice, Power, Majesty, and Government offer to our view, and *Jeremy* Argues, the most native Result of this must be the profoundest reverence; Chapter 10. 7. Verse, *Who would not fear thee O King of Nations? for unto thee doth it appertain.* But we are allowed to entertain more sweet and engageing thoughts of God, as one who condescends from his absolute Greatness

to

to act as a friend with us, So as he will both uſe ſtrange familiarity with the works of his own hands, and allow them to uſe it with him.

In theſe places of Scripture I have choſen for entertaining ſome ſavory Meditations upon *Pleading with God*, *Job* takes him up both ways; in the firſt of them he acknowledges none can plead any right againſt God, as one might do againſt another, for all our Rights are ſwallowed up in his, and founded upon Soveraign pleaſure, there is no common Law to rid Marches between his Right and ours, and indeed theſe are never to be conſidered as oppoſite, the one being but a Dependance on the other, and there is not an indifferent perſon, to whom we can bring our Cauſes; for our party is our judge, and tho we ſhould be ſo fooliſh, as to debate with God, wee'l be forced to remember we are to ſtand or fall eternally by his Sentence, *For he is not a Man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him, neither is there any days-man between us, that might lay his Hands on both.* In the Sence of this he inclines to have things mannaged by a Plea of Mercy, rather than of Juſtice, only he paſſionatly wiſhes a man were allowed to uſe

that

that freedom in pleading for Mercy at the hands of God, that one might have when he tenderly feels his Neighbour's troubles, and pleads with his acquaintance for him, in that expreſſion, *O that a man might plead with God, as one doath for his Neighbour:* where he ſeems to ſpeak more doubtfully of the believer's Priviledges, acceſs & boldneſs at the Throne of Grace; but in the 23. Chapter, he averrs there is a *Seat*, which he would gladly come to, at which the Righteous may diſpute with him and he would not plead againſt them, but rather ſecretly ſupply them with Arguments, and ſtrength to urge them before him, and as it were againſt him. The word in the Original which we have tranſlated *Diſpute with him* is the ſame that we have for the word *Plead* in this 23. Chapter, and alſo in the 16. & 21. and imports an Arguing or advanceing Reaſons for what we ſay, to ſhow our adverſary that we are in the right, and bring him over unto our ſide; yea, it ſignifies an advancing Pleas of Law and Juſtice in ſome Sort for what we ſeek: this is the allowance of a ſet of Men, and we ſhall ſhortly conſider the import of it, the aſſiſtance they have for improving it, in theſe words, *No*

but

but he would put ſtrength in me, and the qualifications of them to whom they belong, in that word *the Righteous*. For the firſt of which, it will be proper that it be cleared what is the manner of his Peoples mannageing their *pleadings with God*.

Firſt, They found upon a Title to Mercy formed out of the Graciouſneſs of the Nature of God, in ſuch Reaſonings as theſe; *But thou art good and Gracious, ſlow to Anger and full of Compaſſion*, Pſal. 26. 7. *How excellent is thy loving kindneſs!* &c.

Pſal. 86. 15.

Secondly, But becauſe Faith is more particular and bold upon experience, therefore they love to plead, as it is his diſpoſition, ſo it has been his uſe and wont to ſhew mercy, *art not thou it which brake Rahab* in pieces, *which wounded the head of the Dragon, Art not thou it which dryed the waters of the* Red *Sea? awake as in the ancient dayes, O arm of the Lord*; Iſa. 51. 9, 10.

Thirdly, Some time they dare plead the incongruity of what is deprecated, and the Lord ſeems to deſign; when he threatned to make an end of *Iſrael*, *Moſes* diſputes it was not fit, for that it would occaſion a reflection among the Heathens, *Numb.* 14. 13, 14. *Then the Egiptians*

Egyptians ſhall hear of it, and the Nations which hear'd the fame of thee, If thou kill them all as one man, will ſay, becauſe the Lord was not able to bring them to the Land he ſwore unto them, therefore he ſlew them.

Fourthly, They plead the ſuitableneſs of what is requeſted, as it's congruous to his Glory, *what will thou do for thy great Name?* and to his way of doing in all other things, *Lord thou gives rain, and makes the Heaven give ſhowers, therefore we'll wait on thee for all theſe things*, *Jer.* 14. 22. Joſh. 7. 9.

Fifthly, He will allow us to make our Arguments out of need, and peece up the ſtrength of them by ſuch expreſſions as theſe, *The Poor Committs his Cauſe to thee*, Pſal. 10. 14. *and the needy ſhall not always be forgotten, the expectation of the Poor ſhall not periſh for ever*, Pſal. 9. 18. *In thee the Fatherleſs findeth Mercy*, Hoſea 14. 3.

Sixthly, Sometimes we draw our Plea from his promiſes, whereby he is pleaſed, as it were to become Debtor to his Creature, Rev. 22. 17. *Whoſoever is a thirſt may come and take of the water of Life freely.* Matth. 11. 28. *Come to me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden.* Upon which I mind, to have heard

a Man going to Execution argued in a most assured and lively manner, thus; O Lord, Thou bade the Weary *Come to thee*, and promised *Rest* in the face of this Sun, and all the witnesses of my sad case this day, I dare averr I am the heavy laden and weary Soul, I take Instruments on it, that I must have rest upon thine own terms.

We are not here to conceive, that our Arguings can give God any new thought of things, or dispose him to any Inclinations, which he had not eternally to do good to man, but they are usefull for forming our own spirits unto a tenderness & liveliness, necessary for making Prayer, & receiving the effects of it, for we no more draw him by our reasonings, than the raw Sailer makes the shoar move toward himself, tho he is ready to think he does; but we do well if we draw our selves up to him by such arts, as things of a great weight are lifted by Engines of curious contrivance; for indeed we have as much reason to wrestle with our selves as with him, and we must many wayes veer about to get out to a roomthie Sea, or catch a favourable Gale, and it will cost us labour to know how to place our sails, I mean arguings with God, so as they may

may beſt receive the favourable influences of Heaven, and ottimes we muſt ſhift the Sails, when the firſt choice will not do.

Seventhly, The ſoul turns even arguments of *Diſcouragement* ſo happily about, as they ſerve to give a noble confidence, and boldneſs unto Faith: If it be urged, Juſtice muſt be ſatisfied, and the Law honoured, the anſwer is made, therefore I ſhould be pardoned; for our Lord Jeſus Chriſt his ſufferings are a more noble ſatisfaction than what I am capable to make, and God will get more honour by my being diſcharg'd throw ſuch a Cautioner, than my eternal chains could yeild; And if it be inſiſted upon, ſins are great, and it ſeems not reaſonable, that ſuch ſhould be forgiven, the ſoul is able to ſtrengthen its own applications to mercy thus, O it is moſt reaſonable, that *where ſin hath abounded Grace ſhould ſuperabound. Pardon mine iniquity, for it is very great*, is good reaſoning with him, who makes mercy illuſtrious upon the moſt deſperate like inſtances of Guilt, and if it ſhould be ſaid, it is a kind of preſumption to plead ſo, *For it is not fit to take the childrens bread and give it to the dogs*; the Soul can ſay, *true Lord! but yet the dogs eat* Pſal. 25. 11.

of

of the crumbs which fall from the Children's table.

Eightly, Where the Spiritual dexterity of disputing goes not this length, there is an Answering of Objections: As when its told the supplicant, *God hears not sinners*; The believer can say, *impenitent Sinners*, who allow themselves in any known iniquity, and he hopes, however humble he is, that he is not of that number: and to that objection, *He that is born of God sinneth not*; he can reply, that is, sinneth not with a complacency in his departure from God.

Joh 9.31.

1 Joh. 3. 9.

Its easie to account for all this freedom and skill the Believer hath at the Throne of Grace, if we consider there is an indeficient secret Supplie of strength secured to him, God will not plead against him with his great Power; no, but he will put strength in him, if he plead against him, its but as a Father Reasons with his Child, for putting him to the Exercise of any capacity he hath, and that he may teach him to maintain his Cause, and have the pleasure of hearing his little Answers, which he either furnishes altogether, or makes out for him; it is not his manner *to crush the Prisoners of the Earth, under his feet, to subvert a man in his cause*, or *to turn aside*

Lam. 3. 35,36,37.

aside the right of a man before the face of the Most High, the Lord approveth not. If he should plead against us with his Great Wisdom, all our reason should fail under the force of his Convictions, if he should Plead against us with his Great Justice, our courage would sink, so as we could not say one word; and if he should Plead against us with his Power, we should cease to be, or Plead any thing at all; but Blessed be his Name he takes another way, and it's owing to this secret supplie of Strength, that we have it upon record, to *Jacob*'s never dying Honour, *Hosea* 12. 3, 4. That *by his strength he had Power with God, yea he had Power over the Angel, and prevailed, he weept and made supplication unto him*, a victory by all the softness of submission and requeest, as it were, God in *Jacob* was more Powerful than God without him: It's in this the Spirit, the Force, the Art of Prayer or Wrestling lyes, & the Holy Ghost, the great Advocate of man within him, assists and mannages the Soul in this exercise, Especially in two Respects.

First, He furnishes matter, *We know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit helps our Infirmities.* O what Rom. 8. 26.

Noble fields of Meditation, and fuel of affections does he lead them into, who by reason of darkness cannot so much as utter Words before God.

Secondly, He gives liveliness whereby they can urge humble requeests, both a liveliness of Faith, to assure the confidence, and hope of success, and Love, to pursue the Blessings that Faith directs unto, and this may be imported in that, *He helps us with groans and sighs that cannot be uttered.*

This is the Spirit which breaths the breath of Life into the Souls of all the Godly, and this natively acts it self in breathing after him who is its Original, by the egrelions of Faith and Prayer, and as he is compared in his Breathings to the blowings of the Wind, the comparison may well hold in this, that as the Wind ofttimes rises surprisingly in a dead calm; so he is pleased seasonably to come in upon the Soul, when under the most discuraging and sinking fitts of heartlesness toward the things of Heaven; sometimes with his more piercing and rousing Blasts of *North Wind*; convictions & terrours, and at other times with the more Gentle Gale of *a South Wind*, sence of Love, hope of Heaven, and joyes in Himself, and this like

Cant. 4. 16,

like a wind comeing over a warm countrie, kindly thaws the Soul into ſuch a ſoftneſs, that all its faculties melt into the Divine Will, and the man acts ſtrangely complacential Emotions toward God, and lively embraces, and ſprightly Converſes with him, as the *Amorous flower* is ſaid to do to the Sun, in his return with his benign and chiriſhing beams, and he hath ſuch a reliſh of the ſweetneſs of this caſe, that he falls down, and worſhips the author of his often reſtored Life; as ever the *Perſian* adored the Sun of nature, for his ſtated returns, and renewing the face of the decayed Earth. I think I hear one who holds himſelf obliged for light and life, unto the Spirit of God, with all the elevation of Soul he can attain unto, expreſſing his Adorations thus.

O laſt of the adored Three,
Proceeding from the Father and the Son,
By ane Inexplicable miſterie;
The ſweetneſs of them both hath flowed
Upon our Souls, by breathings thou allow'd,
Which can reſtore us, when we are undone.
The Father is Loves everlaſting Spring,
The Son Love's precious River, which did bring
The great deſigned Bleſs in crimſons ſtream
Down to the Sons of Adam, *but we Sweem*
In Joyes of the bleſs'd Spr't, as in the Sea,
To which that Spring and river alwayes run,

Their Love our great concernment hath begun,
We owe its consummation unto thee.

When we like Wind-bound Seamen lye,
Or tug at Oars of unassisted pains,
Without Success, we only try
Our weakness by the rattling of our Chains:
But if thou breath, the fetters all are loos'd,
The chains dissolve, and this our mouths confess
By free requests which hitherto were clos'd,
And praise as fast as Prayers they express:
So Birds relieved from the Gin,
Both mount and sing the happy State they're in.

Blest guide of wandring Souls, who made
Each argument of all the Scripture's Store,
And shows us to it, and when thus we're led,
Thou makes it sweet, its infinitly more.
What can the heap of fuel do,
If there be nothing to strike up the Fire,
The best of arguments are useless too,
If Heavenly breathings don't inspire
Our Souls with kindly heat, we'd soon perceive
Prayers would sink us, when they should relieve.

Thou as the Sp'rit of Life does move
Throw all the veins of each Believers Heart,
Yea that Great Body of the Church above,
And that below is quickned by thy Love;
By thee they both perform their part
In Prayers and praises, and it's echoed loud,
Thanks to the Son who gave us Royal Blood,
By taking ours, and thanks unto his Spirit,
By whom the life of God was added unto it.

Thy blowings comeing o'e the field
Of Scripture Promises can make them yeild
Their sweet perfumes sv'y as the winds

That

That from some warmer Regions rise,
Wherein the Soul is Stor'd with all the kinds
Of odoriferous Herbs, sometime surprise
The passing Sailer, with so great a Sweet,
That all the Charms of Smell do seem to meet,

And now, I shall only say something about the Qualification of the Man who is allowed to Dispute with God: He must be *Righteous*, that is he must have both the Righteousness of *Justification*, by Believing, and that of *Sanctification*, by Holiness of Heart and Life: *God heareth not sinners*; it's true the worst of men are commanded to make prayer, but they are not allowed the Familiarity that a man of God's Acquaintance hath, who may go with all that ails him unto God, and tell him what the World may not know, and he takes no trouble of even importunity it self, and he makes out the Requests of his people, which are but imperfect and broken expressions in themselves: But blessed be his Name, he hath not excluded even from Arguing with him all but these, for we may argue with him as Men, when we cannot argue with him as Saints, and plead General, when we have no title to Special Promises, drawing our Reasonings from the Actings or the necessities of Nature, which is also his

own in ſome reſpect, when we cannot from the attainment of Grace.

Some of the *Caſes* I have offered Arguments upon are fitted unto the one ſort, and ſome to the other.

CASE I.

Need of Mercy.

Need of Mercy

AND *Firſt*, if thou would go and ſeek Mercy in the General, and indeed this muſt be one main plea for anſwer to all thy particular *Caſes*, thou may take words in thy mouth, and urge hard for it, by ſuch *Arguments* as theſe,

Arguments

Firſt, Lord thou haſt implanted Mercy into the nature of man, and we juſtly count him unnatural who hath it not, and this Mercy of man extends not only to the rational Creature like himſelf, but even the unreaſonable, we are melted into compaſſion by the ſight of extream miſery on the beaſt that periſhes, ſhall it not be found with thee who art ſo infinitly *perfect*, and toward a creature, Thou haſt given ſuch a vaſt Soul unto that its capable of living in exquiſite pleaſure or torments, as long as thou haſt a Being, can thou be behind with the works of thine hands, in ſo Noble

Matth. 5. 48.

a quality as this is, which sets off every Nature.

Secondly, Thou hast been pleased to say very great things of Mercy, as taking a pleasure in commending it, it's thy pleasure, thou *art rich in Mercy*: it's the Attribute thou hast plac'd next thy Being in the Proclamation of thy Name, *The Lord the Lord God Merciful and Gracious, long Suffering, and abundant in Goodness, &c.* Thou hast said *it reaches to the Heavens*, is *in the Heavens, and above them*; what mean all these words? how becoming unto them is it that thou should show it to many creatures, yea to all that call upon thee, yea that thou should seek out occasions for so Glorious a display, that thou may signalize it by them, how shall we keep up the Faith of what is said, or the Honour we owe that great Attribute without some experience of the truth of these things. Exod. 34. 6, 7. Psal. 57. 10. 36. 5. 108. 4.

Thirdly, Thou hast made use of all the sweet words that can induce a Sinner to have Good thoughts of thee, upon this head, *The Lord is Good and Gracious, slow to anger, and full of compassion, ready to forgive, easie to be intreated, who will repent him of the evil, and turn again*; upon the Faith of these the Sons Jona. 4. 2.

of men come unto thee, and we among the rest desire to come, Lord we plead *Thou wilt not cut off the expectation of*
Psa. 9. 18. *the Poor, nor suffer the hope of the needy to fail*, for it's all founded upon the good report thou hast made to go of thy self; wilt thou send us away empty, after we are come out upon it? what would this do but tempt us to think thou art
Jer. 15. *like the waters that fail* and *thou hast*
18. 20. 7. *deceived us and we were deceived?*

Fourthly, Hast thou not said, *As the*
Isa. 55. 9. *Heaven is higher than the Earth, so are thy wayes higher than ours, and thy thoughts than our thoughts*, to hold out to us, that thou shewes Mercy where man would reckon it presumption to expect or seek it.

Fifthly, Thou knows, without my looking on thee as Merciful to my experience thy Attributes can never have a sweet aspect to me, thy *Wisdom* would appear like cunning to take advantage of me, *Power* like Tyrrany, *Holiness* like irreconcilable enmity, *Justice* like Rigour and severity, *Faithfulness* like peremptorness; but a sence of Mercy would put a Glorious lustre on them all: Power and Mercy joyn'd together render thee in the sight and acknowledgment of thy Creatures wondrously

fit

fit to be the Governour of mankind. *I have heard Power belongs to thee, alſo Mercy, thou wilt give to every one according to his Works.* Pſal. 62. 11. 12.

CASE II.

Want of Light in things of God.

AND becauſe *Light* is the firſt great Mercy God beſtows upon a Soul, he deſigns everlaſting kindneſs for, as it was the firſt particular piece of his Workmanſhip in Nature, *God ſaid let there be Light and there was Light*, Gen. 1. 3. go and plead earneſtly with him, that he would give thee this fundamental Bleſſing of Spiritual Illumination, without which all his Myſteries are loſt to thee, and upon this head thou mayeſt ſay, Want of light in things of God.

Firſt, I know the natural *Light* of the moſt exalted humane Reaſon, and the artificial *Light* of the moſt exquiſite Learning, can never ſuffice for Right conceiving of the things of God, as no man ever yet ſaw the Sun but by its own light, neither can any perceive thee but by thine: thy Spirit is the great Interpreter of thy Word, and Providences, who can Satisfyingly explain them, and I deſire to be content with no leſs than Heaven's Demonſtra- *Argument.*

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tions for things of Heaven and to know and believe God's matters upon his own Teſtimonie, which none is able to reſiſt *O let me in thy Light ſee Light.*

Pſal. 36. 9.

Secondly, If the poor Blind man to whom thou haſt denyed the comfort of the Natural *Light*, urges ſo hard we ſhould pity him who never ſaw the Light of day, and in this has ſo ſtrong an Argument to work on our Compaſſions, allow me to plead with thee, pity one who never ſaw the Light of the *Sun of Righteouſneſs*, that more precious and Glorious Sight, and ſince we give the greateſt Alms to the Blind and Lame, becauſe their viſible Miſery aſſiſts and inforces all their Requeſts, may not I expect thou wilt give liberaly, if thou ſhould allow me only one requeſt, and ſhould aſk what wilt thou that I ſhould do to thee? this ſhould be it, *Lord that I may receive my ſight.*

Mat. 20. 33.

Thirdly, I believe there muſt be a great Diſtinction between the Knowledge that the Natural and the Spiritual Man has of thee, for I ſee he that knows many of the things of God, and can talk ſtrangely of them, yet ſeems not to be perſwaded of all he ſays, otherwiſe he could not but make a better

ter choice than of this poor World for *his all*, but thine own find *the treasure hid in the field*, and for joy thereof go, *and sell all they have, and buy it*, this is not only a knowledge but a believeing, so as to say, now we are sure that these things are so, and we venture our Everlasting *all* upon the Revelation, O make us know the great Difference which lyes in this, between being taught of men and being *taught of God*. Math 13. 45. John 6. 45.

Fourthly, If it be said of Natures *Light, truely the light is sweet and a pleasent thing ti is for the eyes to behold the Sun*, how much sweeter would it be to behold thee, the Original & Primigenial Light, and to have a Light from thee, shining upon all other things with us! Eccl. 11. 7.

Fifthly, Thou knows how much such a Light as this would establish my heart, and assure my Way, in the Dutys of Religion, and that according as this grows or decays, rises or falls, so does my Seriousness and Livelines in Everlasting concerns, when thy Light strikes Vigorously on the Spiritual sence, I'le go to work *Vivaciously*, but when that withdraws, my Spirits sink as in the darkness and Horrours of the night.

Sixthly O how becoming and suteable is it unto thee to give light to one who sits

Isa. 10. 17. Jam. 1. 17. Isa. 8. 11. Job. 36. 22. Isa. 48. 17. sits in darkneſs, thou art the *Light of Iſrael, The Father of Lights*, from whom the beſt of Gifts deſcend, thine it is to *inſtruct with a ſtrong hand, who teaches like thee?* thou *teaches to profit*, and has thy Chair in Heaven, and inſtructs more in one Moment, than all the Doctors in the World in years or Ages.

Math 20. 30. *Seventbly*, Thou called unto thy ſelf two blind men who ſat by the way ſide, and *cryed that Jeſus the Son of David would have Mercy upon them*, and reſtored their ſight, therein giving us, among many others, a ſpeciall ground of Hope, that thou would do ſome ſuch thing for us; wilt thou not pity us, who requeſts a more valuable favour than they who ſought eyes that they might ſee the light of the Sun of nature? we ſeek Illumination, that we may be capable to do thy Work; Thou who anſwers Deſires for Natural things be pleas'd to anſwer requeſts for things ſpiritual.

CASE III.

Need of Forgiveneſs.

Need of Forgiveneſs. BUT, ſince *Pardon of Sin* is that precious Channel, by which he conveys ſo many Mercies to the Creature, thou mayſt go, and plead for it by ſuch Arguments as theſe. *Firſt*,

First, Lord I have heard *Thou art a God ready to pardon, slow to anger, of great Kindness*, and easie to be entreated, which gives me ground to think thou wilt bestow this favour upon all that humbly seek it, and that thou art even waiting for peoples comeing to make request for it, that thou may'st have occasion to show thy Gracious disposition, I am among these that seek it this day, O forgive first the unworthiness of my Prayer; and then the Guilt I plead against. Neh. 9. 17.

Secondly, I know thou loves to make discoveries of thy Power, and thy Power cannot but be great, if thou shouldest pardon such Sins as mine, which when Conscience does its office with me, I am tempted to say are greater than can well be forgiven; it's called a kind of Power among men to be deny'd unto revenge, O what Omnipotency must it it be that can bear with my Provocations, so as to give me a Reprive, but how astonishing must it be, that can give a full Remission! Thou art Lord of thy Fury, and Master of thy self, otherwayes I could not expect it, therefore *I beseech thee, let the Power of my Lord be great according as thou said. The Lord God Merciful and Gracious, long Suffering* Num. 14. 17, 18, 19.

Suffering and abundant in goodneſs and Truth, Pardoning Iniquity and Tranſgreſſions, and give me evidence of it by pardoning mine.

Thirdly, I know thou would be feared, and this is due unto thee from all thy Creatures, but thou can never be feared as thou ſhouldſt without beſtowing this Mercy, *There is forgivennes with thee that thou mayeſt be feared*, without it I may feat thee, as Devils and Damned Perſons do, with deſperation, and horrour, breeding perpetual averſion; but this is a Fear not good enough for a God, who is ſo much to be Loved, I would gladly have a better for thy ſake, a Fear mixed and ſweetned with Love, Humility, Tenderneſs and Submiſſion.

Pſal 130. 4.

Fourthly, I believe that thou haſt placed that Word in thy Name, when thou Proclaim'd it to *Moſes*, *Pardoning Iniquity Tranſgreſſion and Sin*, of deſign to ſhow us that thou forgives all kinds of ſin, and as my Tranſgreſſions are of many kinds, ſo ſome of them are of the worſt.

Fifthly, Thou haſt bidden us forgive our Neighbour, *Tho he offend againſt us ſeventy times ſeven*; may I not expect thy forgivenneſs ſhall be oftner than that of man, as thou art greater than he,

Math. 18. 22.

he, as there is no comparison betwixt thee and him in Nature, so let there be none in thy Graciousness, and multiplications of *Pardon*. Thou said thou would'st not *go into the City*, to destroy it, *because thou art God and not Man*. O how becoming is it unto thy being God, that the instances of Pardon should be innumerable, since thou hast commanded us to extend ours so far? Hos. 11. 9.

Sixthly If thou would forgive mine iniquity, it would cure me of all my uneasiness, it should be health to my Bones, and I should not feel my sores, *the Inhabitant shall not say he is sick*, when his Iniquity is pardoned. Isa. 33. 24

CASE IV.

Pleadings for Faith in the Son of God.

BUT thou art (and thou cannot but be) sensible, that there is something essentialy necessary to thy obtaining so great a Mercy as *Forgivenness*, even upon thy part, for tho' the Covenant of Grace may be called *Absolute*, & rather a *Promise*, than a Covenant, for that all necessary to Life and Godliness must be of free Grace, yet some things must be done in order to make thee capable of many of its Blessings, and *Faith* Pleadings for Faith in the Son of God

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is a main one of these, upon the consideration of which thou art complaining, thou cannot attain that superlative esteem of our Lord Jesus Christ, which would oblidge thee to venture thine everlasting *all* upon his precious offer in the Gospel; upon this head thou may'st Go and plea in such a manner.

John 6. 44. Rom. 9. 16. *First* Lord I have eard *That no Man can come unto Christ, except the Father which sent him draw him*, and it is not *of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who sheweth mercy*, Eph. 2. 8. and all that are saved *are saved thorow Grace, by Faith, and that not of themselves, it is the Gift of God*; Therefore I come to seek it at thy hands. Never man had it another way, I know and I own my nature is as backward as any can be.

Secondly, I know the *Covenant* thou has made with Man for Salvation *is* 2Sam. 23. 5. *well ordered in all things*, and this is an of its pieces of precious Order, that thou not only provides a Great Reward for him who enters into it, but also hast secured the very condition of it, & for our Encouradgement called it the Eph. 2. 12 *Covenant of promise*, so that all must be of thee.

Thirdly, If thou would be pleased to enable

enable me to *Believe* I should do Honour to all thine Attributes, I have thrown so much dishonour upon; and especially, I should Glorifie thy Wisdom in admiring the precious and Glorious Contrivance of Salvation, by such a Redeemer as thine own Son; I should Celebrate the praises of thy Mercy, that set Wisdom on search for so great a thing, I should justifie the Procedures of Justice, in taking satisfaction of such a Cautioner, when the Guilty sinner could not give it in such perfection, and should commend the Holiness of God, for that he would not bestow life on the fallen Creature, but in this way so becoming the Greatness and the Glory of his Nature.

Fourthly, O! what a sad matter is it, that all my Dutys of Religion should be at best nothing else but Splendid Sins, specious Formalities, and they can be no other without *Faith*, without which *it is impossible to please God*: I desire to lament it, that all the Acts of my Devotion in this Case are but the performances of an enemy, little better than Acts of Hostility. Heb. 11. 6.

Fifthly, What an Heart must it be, that cannot Bless God with the utmost Liveliness, for that ever he pleas'd

to ſend our Lord into the World, and I that cannot give thanks to that Redeemer, for his being willing to come, and ſtand betwixt us and endleſs wrath.

1. Tim. 1. 15. Can I but think it a *faithfull ſaying* and therefore be moſt throughly perſwaded of it, *and worthy of all acceptation*, and therefore with the moſt endeared affections, and moſt cordial embracements I am capable off, laying hold upon ſuch a Condeſcention as this is. O! may I be perſwaded that *he is able to ſave to* Heb. 7. 25. *the uttermoſt all that come to God through him, becauſe he ever lives to make Interceſſion* to the uttermoſt of all our Hopes, of all our Deſires, of all our Guilt, of all our Capacity, and to the uttermoſt of Eternity: and by this be perſwaded unto him, and ſay, with all my Heart I am well pleaſed with the device of Salvation through him, and deſire to be happy through none other, counting nothing ſo deſireable as to *be found* Philip. 3. 8. *in him not having mine own Righteouſneſs which is of the Law; but the Righteouſneſs which is of God by Faith: and may I count all things but loſs and Dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt, and* Mar. 9. 24 *that I may win him.* Lord I would gladly *believe help thou* rebelling *unbelief*, 2 Cor. 10. 5. *and bring into Captivity every thought unto the obedience of Chriſt.* CASE

CASE V.

For the Reviving and Relieving Influences of the Holy Ghost.

BUT because it is necessary that thou should serve God with a perfect Heart and willing mind, without which the Mercy of Pardon would be a very incompleat Happiness, and also very tasteless to a renewed Soul; plead with God for the perpetual breathings of his Spirit, to hold thy Heart always in Warmness and Softness, and to make his Work to go well away with thee. For the reviveing & reliéving influences of the Holy Ghost.

First, O Lord! thou knowest how useless it is for me to tug at the Oars of unassisted endeavours, and what a great measure of hopeless pains is in this poor exercise; the Seamen can never think to make a Voyage without the favourable Gale, which he watches for, nay not so much as to get his Vessel brought to motion without it, and I can do no more in Grace, than he does in Nature. *Argument.*

Secondly, Thou hast not only appointed the Sea, to be the Element whereby a perpetual Trade should be kept up, but has ordered it so in Nature, that the Winds shall often blow from different Corners of the World, to answer

the neceſſities and Expectations of Traders and Paſſengers; may not I plead that thou who haſt appointed Ordinances and other means alſo, whereby we may get up to Heaven, would be pleaſed to do as much in Grace, as thou doſt in Nature, add the Propitious gale of thy Spirit's breathings.

Thirdly, We have it put out of queſtion and debate, what has been thy compaſſion to the Sons of Men, in that thou
Jo. 3. 16. ſent *Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt into the World to ſave them*; and it is as much beyond all doubt, how great his kindneſs towards us was, in that he was *pleaſed to*
Math 20. 28. *give his life a Ranſome for many*. O let us have an Evidence of the Compaſſions of the Spirit of God alſo, that we may give our praiſes to all the three Perſons o the inconceiveable & adorable God-head, and how ſhall we have this proof, but by the Spirits doing his work upon the Soul of man, to reach the great deſign of Chriſt's Death, in his convincing, Exciting, Reviveing and Refreſhing Influences upon our heartleſs Hearts. We muſt look upon our Praiſes as Incompleat, although we can ſay Glory to God who deviſed our Redemption, and to him who bought it at the price of the moſt precious Blood that

ever

ever was shed, if we cannot add unto him also who has by his Seasonable and incessant Breathings perswaded us to venture our everlasting *all* upon that precious way to Heaven, and has always maintain'd the Sence of the happy choice we made, when first we were led in to thee.

Fourthly, We are Debtors to thee for thy offers of Salvation, but we shall never be in Case either to get good of it, or give thee Praises for it, if thou do not allow thy Spirit, to give us a Sence of our Obligations, and set us to our Work: and O what pity is it, that so great things should be lost on us, for want of somewhat more, which could make all reach its design, we have heard *thy Work is perfect*, and thou bestows thy Gifts *Liberally*, and we plead, that belongs to thy Liberality, that thou should give us Mercy in such a way, as we should be the better of it. Deut. 32. 4. Ja. 1. 5.

Fifthly, This is one of the best ways in all the World to make thy self precious to our Souls, to give us often reviveings by the breathings of thy Spirit: If the sweetness of Natural life be so great, that it renders all the means of its Support and Refreshments so de-

ſireable, how much more delightfull is that Supernatural life of God in the Soul of Man, and how much would it endear unto us the Spring of that life, to feel often the Emanations of it upon our dead and fainting Spirits, We ſhould be ready to ſay, wee'l never forget that of which we hold our Life.

Pſal. 119. 93.

CASE VI.

Complaint of the want of Fervency in Love to God.

Complaint of the want of fervency in love to God.

BUT, it may be thou finds it's thy ordinary caſe, that thou cannot, exerciſe any lively Love of God and Chriſt, yea thou dare hardly ſay, thou haſt a rational Love to him, and therefore thou concludes thou canſt have no reality in the matter of Religion, and that wrathful denunciation, *Let him be accurſed who loves not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, has a dreadful ſound oftimes in thine ears, upon this Caſe thou may Go, and plead with him thus,

1 Co. 16. 22.

Arguments

Firſt, Lord what a difficult thing do I find it to love thee in ſincerity, how much more *with all the Soul and Heart and Strength*, Thou art ſo Spiritual, it is much for me to take thee up at all, and more for me to be taken up with

Mark 12. 30.

thee, in these Elevations of Soul that are becoming. I am so under the power of Sence, that I can hardly get one abiding impression of thy Glorious and Spiritual Perfections, these are Ravishing to the Angels & the unbodied People, who are freed from the dulness of such flesh and blood as I have; but to me they cannot be so takeing, because not so suited to my mortal state, so wholy swallowed up in what is visible. Thou who said *that as a Father pitieth his Children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him*; because *thou knows their frame, and Remembers they are Dust*, be pleased to consider the disadvantages I suffer by this body, and pardon the weakness of my conceptions of, and affections unto thee. Psal. 103. 13, 14.

Secondly, Although thou hast made thy unconceivable Loveliness to be more takeing to us, by giving a discovery of it in the Son of God being made man, whereby thy Glories in the Face of Jesus Christ shine less dazeling, and more sweetly, yet even by this we cannot get up to the exercise of thy Love: O what a sweetness must it be, that when thou hast drawn thine Image upon the Person, (who I must own) has done more for me than all the world

yet I am not captivated with it, even tho in him, and tho the Loveliness of God, and my poor Nature are wrapt together, yet I can Love the one, and Neglect the other; although in other things relation causes me to Love, as it were by a Natural Instinct, even where there are no qualifications, the relation thou hast made between God and man does not allure; This must be a strong and strange aversion, which I desire to lament.

Thirdly, I am fore'd to see a Loveliness in many of thine Attributes, thy Spirituality, Wisdom, Dominion, Power, and especialy Mercy and Faithfulness; but there is one of thy Attributes, that turns my stomach Naturaly against all; Thy Holiness, *whereby evil cannot dwell with thee, and Fools shall not stand in thy sight, and thou hatest the workers of Iniquity*. Because this crosses me so much, I cannot easily be reconcil'd to it, and shall this be the ground of my aversion from God, that's the most Glorious and the Loveliest of all his Attributes, that's his very Face and Beauty, O what a heart must it be, that hates God, because he inclines to act God-like in all his dispensations, in his advancing his own Glory by all means that

Psal. 5. 4, 5.

are

are ſutable, and for that which his Saints ſo much Celebrate. Pſal. 32. 4. Ex. 15. 11.

Fourthly, I deſire to lament it, that when love ſhould be the life of all my duties, my Prayers, Hearing, Meditation, and Communicating, all is dead, all is dead for want of Love, and tho I Covenanted ſometimes with a ſpecial eye to this, that Light and Life and Love might all be furthcoming to me, as I ſhould need, yet I find little or nothing of theſe; this muſt be diſcouraging.

Fifthly, Better it were I had no Heart to Love any thing at all, than thus to be dead to God who gave me Life; and dead almoſt to nothing ſo much as unto him. O how much all my capacity to Love is loſt, when it can never reach up to God, and baſely and Sacrilegiouſly thrown away, when miſbeſtowed on any thing beſide; ſhall I thus put contempt upon God, that gave me affections, by ſaying, I love any thing before him, and when nothing will admit of my Love, I'le court him out of a mercenary reſpect, becauſe I know he can do me a Good turn, when all things elſe are uſeleſs? I am afraid thou wilt reckon my not loveing thee in proſperity baſe, and my loving thee in

in adverſity only for relief little better.

Sixthly, What a diſſimulation muſt it be and an impudence alſo for me, to be alwayes making Prayer to God, with a ſhow of humility for mercy, and giving thee thanks, and in the mean time not a grain of ſincere Love in all this? It's bold dealing to God's Face, who ſearches all hearts. I would count it baſeneſs to be ſeeking favours of them we abhore, fond to praiſe them whom we hate is little better than to mock them, and to mock thee at this rate, is too great an adventure for any Soul to make.

CASE VII.

Want of the Pleaſures of Religion.

Want of the pleaſures of Religion.

IT may be thou cannot deny that thou Loves God, but thou finds very little of the ſweetneſs and joy of Duty, which thou oftimes moſt taſtleſly performes, Thou may plead for this by ſuch *Arguments* as theſe.

Arguments

Firſt, Lord thou haſt implanted into Nature a ſtrange love of Peace and Pleaſure, and all the Creatures are ſtill working in purſuit of theſe; may not I ſeek them rather in Religion, as in any

any thing elſe? I am ſure if thou allow us them in the Creature, thou doeſt much more in thy ſelf; and if I could find them with thee, it would make that ſtrong current of deſire after them run in the right Channel, how happily would duty & delight be united! and here I ſhould not exceed as I do in other things.

Secondly, Let me get as much Joy in thy way, as will outbid the pleaſures of the World, that are oftimes courting my affections, and then I ſhall anſwer the Tentations of life by an Argument of their own; I feell a ſweetneſs already in a ſtream, that's neither ſo muddy nor ſhallow, as that which would take me off from God, and how ſhall I leave my *Sweetneſs*, to Reign over, if it were all the things of time? Judg. 9. 11.

Thirdly, I know not how many a bitter Storm may be to go over my Soul, e're I finiſh my Journey in this Wilderneſs, and if I get not ſome experience of the Joyes of the Holy Ghoſt, which I may look back unto, as well as for the preſent life upon, I am afraid my Faith ſhall not be able to bear me through, whereas if I have theſe, the very remembrance of them ſhall be uſeful, when the renewing of them may

be denyed, and I ſhould frequently intertain my ſelf in dark and diſmal hours with ſuch an exerciſe, *I will never forget thy Statutes, for by them thou haſt quickned me.*

Pſal. 119. 93.

Fourthly, Go and ſay to him, it is but Reaſonable, that he ſhould be ſerv'd in ſuch a manner, as will declare he is worthy of all chearfull obedience, and as we may be in caſe to commend his way to others by this Argument, it is not inconſiſtent with the Laws of his Houſe to have the Garments of Joy for our every days habite, nor is it neceſſary to be alwayes diſcouraged, why ſhould that be ground to object to any of thine, *wherefore looks thou ſo lean from day to day being the Kings Son?*

2 Sam. 13. 4.

Fiftly, Did thou not promiſe that thou would take him who *laid hold upon thy Covenant, and bring him to thy holy Mountain, and make him joyful in thy houſe of Prayer*; when I find nothing of this, I think I have too Good reaſon to ſuſpect the reality of my engagements unto thee, it ſeems I am not of the number of theſe, *for whom joy and gladneſs is Sown, even the upright:* for if I were, I could not but find them growing up at ſome time or other, and the Fruits of the Holy Ghoſt are Righteouſneſs

Iſa. 56. 7. Pſa. 97. 11. Rom. 14. 17. Gal. 5. 22.

Righteousness, Joy, & Peace; and can he be with me who knows so little of these

Sixthly, If thou would give me thy Joy, it would not only contribute to my interest, but to thine: for by this I would be able to give thee a far greater Rent of Glory, all my duties would have another kind of Livelinesse, and Savourinesse, than what are now, and I would be far oftner at them; if the sweetnesse of them were to draw me, than when meer custom, or Natural Conscience drags me to them, and I would go forth in them, *as a strong man Rejoycing to run his Race*, with a vigour such as we exert for the sence of pleasure, with how much earnestnesse, and edginesse would I be imployed in digging deep into the very Life & Power of Godlinesse, because the greatest Measures of *Pleasures* are to be found there, and thus *the joy of the Lord should* many ways *be my strength.* Psa. 19. 5. Neh. 8. 10.

CASE VIII.

Willfull Inconstancy of Frame.

BUT, Tho' thou seems to have some times no small allowance of this joy, thou complains thy *Frame* appears to thee sometimes lively, and e're thou art aware it's gone, so as thou thinks thy Willfull Inconstancy of Frame.

thy ſelf worſe as before; Go to God upon this, and lay thy Caſe before him ſo,

Firſt, Lord I cannot get ſolid Comfort, nor give thee praiſes for any of my *Frames*, becauſe they bear ſtill too much the ſad mark of theſe, of whom thou ſaid their *Goodneſs was as the morning Cloud, and early Dew, which paſſes away*: For when I would gladly bleſs thee for attainments, my Heart tells me, it may be I am Bleſſing thee for what I have not, and this will be found but a lying unto God with my Tongue, and a mocking of thee, and a wofull deceiving my ſelf, and thus I dare not pay thee the Revenue which is due for thy Work of Grace.

Hoſ. 6. 4.

Secondly, Haſt thou not ſaid, *He that believeth on me out of his belly ſhall flow Rivers of living Waters*, When thou ſpake of the Holy Ghoſt, that he ſhould receive, to aſſure us that there is in all Believers a freſh and never failing Spring of Grace, and muſt mine only be like a ſtanding Pool, or Lake, that the Summers heat of more favourable Providences, or the Winter Froſt of more Croſs, ſhall dry up? I have heard *the path of the juſt is as the ſhining light that ſhineth more and more unto*

Joh. 7. 38. 39.

Pro. 4. 18.

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the perfect day; So as no Clouds nor Storms can hinder its advances, what ſhall I ſay of mine, that looks like a Sun ſetting in the Morning or forenoon of day?

Thirdly, Many ſhort and uncertain Warmneſſes in thy matters leave me under a greater Coolneſs, than I think I ſhould have had, if I had never experienced them; alace! that theſe fits and ſtarts of Seriouſneſs ſhould only be Preparatives to make deadneſs in, and diſtaſte of Duty take the deeper upon my Carnal and Weary Heart, I am afraid my *ſtaying long in the place of the breaking forth of Children*, imperfect Reſolutions, imperfect Engagements ſhall prove Dangerous and Deadly. Hoſ. 13. 13

Fourthly, Thou knows how long a time and how great a labour it coſts me, to attain to any tollerable *Frame*, and ſhall it all evaniſh before I get the reliſh of its ſweetneſs, or its Fruit? This is to be long toyling at breaking the ſhell of Duty, and when I get through that, the Kernell is ſnatched away, and ſo I have a weariſome Seed-time, and Harveſt of diſappointment. Hoſ. 8.7.

Fifthly, Haſt thou not ſaid that Religion conſiſts in doing? and muſt I always have a *Frame* that brings me the length

length only of resolving? Thus is always to be beginning, and never going further, for my seriousness leaves me before I can bring any thing to perfection: and when my *Frame* returns again after a long discontinuance, I begin again with the same trifling Resolutions I had before, which grows still more and more tasteless, the longer they are repeated to no effect, O what kind of Sowing must this be, in which the Corn is always blasted, as soon as the blade appears green above the ground? It looks not like the Sowing *of which we shall reap everlasting life*, it's rather like that which is fallen under the Curse, let it be like *the Grass upon the House tops, withered e're it be grown*: Nay I am afraid my Resolutions fill the eye, and keep me off from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Gal. 6. 8.

Psal. 129. 6.

CASE IX.

Doubtings of the Foundamental Truths.

Doubtings of the Foundation Truths.

BUT, It may be thou hast a sadder thing to complain off than all these, that thou hast a Heart that cannot believe the great and *Foundamental Truths* of Religion, and indeed this is a thing that looks very terrible, and calls for thy wrestling with God by

by an extraordinary application, which thou may form after this manner.

First, I find that according to my believing or not believing everlasting things, my seriousness rises or falls, grows or decays; and my very doubtings about thee, cut the throat of my aspirings. so that I can hardly breath after the remedy I come to seek of God against them, and thou knows *if the foundations be destroyed what can* I do, all my Religious performances are but like building in the Air, costly & painful work of meer imagination, why should I go a step further, if that which should be the first step be never made? wherefore is all this waste of time & strength? for I can call it no better, when I am always laboriously doing nothing. *Arguments* Psa. 11. 3. Isa. 55. 2.

Secondly, I am afraid I have taken up my belief upon the credit of these I was born among, and have it not deeply and solidly laid on thy Testimony, and I am perswaded *soundness of mind*, believing the truths of God upon God's own evidences, and having heavens demonstrations for the things of Heaven, is a rare priviledge, & can only be obtained from thee; *O let not my Faith stand in the Wisdom of men, but in the Power of God even in the demonstration of the Spirit & of Power.* 2 Tim. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 2. 4. 5.

Thirdly, Lord I desire to lament that my capacity is so suited to the conceptions of the trifles of this life, but so far disproportioned to the principal and brightest Truths, altho they be written on almost every thing I see and feel, O *what meeting with darkness in the day time, and groping in the noon day as in the night* is this? *I grope as if I had no eyes, I stumble at noon-day as in the night*, when I cannot see God.

Job. 5. 14.

Isa 59. 10.

Fourthly, At least give me as much of Faith, as shall prevail against my doubtings so far as to Justify its own reality, by holding me alway under concern about Everlasting things, greater than what I have for all things beside; let my endeavours for thee and Heaven, force their way throw all opposition an evil world, and a worse heart makes to them, that so I may have ground to conclude, it must be persuasion of thee, that has brought me the length of *forsaking all and following thee.*

CASE X.

A Heartlessness in all Performances.

Heartlessness in duty.

BUT Oh what a dullness, yea stupidity is this I feel my Spirit un-

der

der? for ordinary it's rather like Death it self, than a meer deadness in my disposition, it's sad in the mean time, and betokens worse, make thy Arguments upon this head to this purpose,

First, Lord, can a Soul that is so unaffected with God, with Heaven and Glory, and all that is Great and Eternal, as mine is, be free of a predominant Atheism and infidelity? I think this kind of withering that is upon the leaves of my profession, and rottenness in the fruit of my duties, do say there is such a worm as one of these at the root of all. I'le be greatly moved with the proposal of some dying vanity of time, or the threatning of the loss of some shadow or other, because I believe there is a reality in these; and yet all that is said of thee works no more upon me, than if Everlasting things were but words that perish as soon as spoken. *Arguments*

Secondly, Art not thou the God of Life? Natural, Spiritual and Eternal, it is all of thee; it's thy manner to bestow Life on thy dying Creature, it will cost thee but a very little to bid me live, and if thou say the word, even spiritual death it self the most senseless of all things, shall rise up to obey. O how sugable is it to him who is the spring

Pſa. 36.9. of Life, with whom is *the fountain and veyn of Lives*, to let a drop of that Spring fall on ſuch a dead dry uſeleſs piece of dirt, as I am, which could make me Freſh and Green, Fragrant and Fruitful in a moment, thou loves rather to take thy precious Names from the Actings of Grace, than of Nature, and if thou would do this Gracious thing
Pſa. 42.8. for me, I would call thee the God of my life, upon far ſweeter and more valuable accounts, than the moſt proſperous Natural man can do.

Thirdly, What a ſtrange and ſad thing is this that my approaching to attend to thee, who art Life and Love, ſhould have ſo little uſefulneſs for my revival: our drawing near the Natural Sun brings heat upon us neceſſarily, our looking to great things raiſes a kind of Greatneſs of thought, and walking with the Wiſe makes Wiſe, but our coming into thy preſence ſeems rather to deaden
Pſa. 16.11. the Soul *tho in thy preſence be fulneſs of joy.*

Joh. 11. 25. *Fourthly*, Haſt thou not ſaid *He that believeth on the Son of God although he were dead yet ſhall he Live*, becauſe he is the Reſurrection and the Life. O help me to this great attainment, which is the firſt cauſe and the centring of

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the vital acts of a Soul, because it unites with the root, from which the vital sap does flow to him who never knew Spiritual Life before, and also it is that which sets all the veins of the Belivers Soul a working under his most sinking deadness.

CASE XI.

Not making any sensible Advance by Ordinances

IT may be thou art saying, what shall I make of this, that I am continually following a course of Duty, and I find my self nothing bettered by it, but rather worse; this cannot but make weariness and tempt to give over, upon this lay out the sence of thy case so. Not making any sensible advance by Ordinances.

First, Can there be any thing more sad, than to be alwayes going further from God by all the means, by which others have been brought near him, shall I thus pray, meditate, hear and Communicate my self out of sight and sence of God altogether? to have my Meat and Drink Cursed to me, by being uncapable of giving Nurishment or sickning me on every taking is lamentable, but to have my Prayers and *Arguments* Mic. 6. 14.

Communions curs'd is a far more dreadful instance of wrath.

Secondly, Lord, when poor Nature alone is at constant exercise, I see increase and strength the fruits of it, Habits grow by Acts, the Husbandman's Seed-time brings a Harvest, and the Merchant's adventuring a Rich return from far; O cannot Grace do as much as Nature? it is not suitable to its Honour that it should not; but alace it is a shrewd Symptome, that I have none, that I am never better by my long continued poor and worthless pains.

Thirdly, Hast thou not said, *The righteous shall hold on his way, and he who has clean hands shall grow stronger and stronger.* And, *the path of the just is as the shining light, which shines more and more unto the perfect day.* And *they who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength.* If I be among the number of these, how is it with me this day, wherein I am so far short of what I think I once was? I am afraid that because my Religion has not had root, it has straight *sprung up and withered away.*

Job. 17. 9. Prov. 4. 18. Isa. 40. 31. Mark 4. 4, 5.

Fourthly, Thou knowest, to work for nothing makes exceeding lameness in any Case, and when I am still giving out, and never getting any thing in-

I cannot long hold on. It is true, my outgivings are litrl worth, but they are labour and toile to him that can do little more; and I will come to that at length, I'le rather sit idle as be altogether working idle.

Fifthly, Thou gives the Art to manage things in Nature, in order to increase, *The Plowmans God does instruct him* for his labour, that it may be successfull, and if thou does instruct and teach him discretion, *and this comes from the Lord who is wonderful in counsel*, that he orders his Ground right, it must come from thee, that I can order my heart, an unfavourable Soil, and sow for Heaven there, I hope thou wilt be as ready to show me how to sow for Heaven, as how bread-Corn is to be bruised. Isa. 28. 26. 29.

Sixthly, I know the solicitous husbandman may labour most skilfully and painfully, and yet there shall be no returns, if heaven do not its part by Rain to refresh the Earth, and heat to ripen the Fruits; and if it be so in Nature, it is no less so in Grace: he that planteth and he that watereth is nothing here, thou thy self only can give the increase. One of thine Elect is worth any [illegible] *the Vanity of the Crea-*

Jer. 14. 22. *vain, that can give rain? Or can the Heavens give Showers? Art not thou he, O Lord! therefore we will wait on thee; thou hast made all these things.* Here is meant, among my poor vain and worthless attempts, that can give success to mine, therefore thou hast allowed me to look to thee for it.

CASE XII.

Want of lively views of God's Face.

Want of lively views of Gods face

IF it be thy complaint, although I be still making a fashion of waiting on God, I cannot say that ever he lifts up the light of his Countenance, so as to give me distinct and *lively* views of him, which could yield a Satisfaction, as the sensible presence of these I value does: on this Case thou may plead to.

First, If *Absolom* counted it so great a ground of Complaint, *I have stayed* 2 Sam. 14. 32. *so long at Jerusalem and have not seen the King's face*; What shall I say for that I am still hanging on about Ordinances, and can never have a lively sight of the God of them? Sometimes I am tempted to think it had not been so sad to have been both where they were not to be found, as to live at this rate surrounded with God's light and never able to comprehend it.

Secondly

Secondly, O! How far has the curiosity of some men carried them for seeing a creature, that had either some thing of Strangeness, or rare beauty in it? what a shame is it that I have no more Ambition to see God, the Original light and Glory, and who is all wonder even to him who knows most of him? We are taken with fair and Admirable things, may I see thee who can outbid all the Creation for both these.

Thirdly, Thou knows what a Luxury of the eyes which cannot be satisfied I am guilty off, the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with Hearing, and the thirsty eyes are gadding abroad perpetually after all that can entertain them, one sight of thee could Cure them of that Disease, thou can look all beauty into deformity, and all created light into Darkness, and if thou would open up thine excellencys to me, this should leave me restless, till I should get further Views, that would tice me on to that view which makes the Beatifick Vision. Eccl. 1. 8.

Fourthly, Thou knows the Creatures cannot live, or grow without this Sun of Nature Dispensing his benign Influences, thy Countenance is more to me than the light and heat of it can be to them

Natures

Psal. 143. 7. them, as thou shows it I must revive, *and as thou withdraw, I decay, for if*

Psal. 30. 7. *thou hide thy face I must be like them who go down into the pit and cannot escape to be troubled.*

Fifthly, As all things look fair in this lower Creation only by the light of the Sun, so by the light of thy Countenance lifted up on me shall all things look comfortable: if the light of Nature can make the most solitary and dismal places somewhat agreable, the sight of God shall make my saddest Afflictions appear as fair as Prosperity can be without it, and infinitly more.

Psal. 42. 2. & 63. 2. *Sixthly*, I see the desire of all thy People has been to come and appear before God, *the living God*, and there must be some excellent thing in this discovery, which has made all them that ever had it say, *they were made very*

Psal. 21. 6. Act. 2. 28. *glad in the light of thy Countenance*, and to have it for their Prayer ever afterward, *turn away mine eyes from beholding Vanity.*

Psal. 119. 37.

CASE XII.

Unwilling Thoughts of, and meeting with Communion.

Unwilling thoughts of Communion.

BUT it may be thou art saying sometimes, what a sore matter is

is at that I should never hear of a Communion coming on any place near by, but it makes a dash upon my Spirit, and when I hear it is drawing on in the place I am most nearly concerned in, it works a direct Terror; for I find I am in this sad strait, I must Communicat, by reason of the awful Command, and yet I dare not for fear of doing it unworthily, and that is Damnation under a Special Certification, what shall I do? It were less if I were only afraid to approach, because of being out of Frame; but I think I see my self Fundamentally wrong, not having honestly engaged unto God; at least I cannot aver I have Sincerity, which will justifie the reality of my state of Grace: Go and plead for help in this Case also by such Arguments as these.

First, Thou hast said, *Thou wilt look to the man that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and trembles at thy word*, when thou wilt not regard a Building as stately as the vanity of Man can make it, if thou respect such, may not I plead, show some regard to one that trembles so much at thy most awful Ordinance, which thou hast railed about with threatnings of hot burning wrath on the rash Adventurer. I hope thou will not con- Isa. 66. 2.

deman altogether my fears which flow from the apprehension of the Dreadfulness of a place, which is no other than
Gen. 28. 17. the Gate of Heaven and House of God.

Secondly, I would far rather be among the number of these whose Humility thou commends, *for that they*
Luk. 14. 10. *sat down in the lower Room, and when the Master of the Feast had call'd higher*, than among these who sit down in the higher place, and are brought out of it with a Rebuke for Presumption, as having nothing to do there, and I hope it will not be so dangerous to use a jealous backwardness, even tho a fault, as to meet with that woefull Challenge,
Math. 22. 12. *Friend how camest thou in hither? not having the Wedding Garment.*

Thirdly, I would Gladly plead with the poor Woman of *Canaan*, *Yet Lord*
Math. 15. 27. *the dogs eat of the Crumbs that fall from the Childrens Table*, Tho I dare not call my self a Child, yet I reckon him only and eternally happy who is one, and his provisions are such, that even these who have the scantiest allowance are well entertain'd. I cannot tell if I may sit down at the Table with them, but I would be near, and catch as earnestly as I may such offers of Mercy as are going and tho' I dare not plead a right, I would

would plead a need, if I may not plead the Claim of the Child, let me plead the Claim of the Dog, and Humility never displeases thee.

Fourthly, A Fear to approach thee in this great Duty, seems but suitable to the order thou hast given about it, for thou hast beset that great Command, so let him eat of this bread, with a Sea of Guilt upon the one hand, *he that eats unworthily is guilty of the Body and blood of our Lord*, and a Sea of Wrath on the other, *he eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself*, so that when I stand for any safety upon the Rock that is between the two, *let him examine himself*, I tremble to think how ready I am to fall over into these Gulfs. 1 Cor. 11. 27, 28, 29.

Fifthly, Shall it be always so with me, that the greatest Mercy in all the World shall be an affrightment unto me, I know one thing that would help it, and which thou alone can give, even my being resolved so to be for God as most resolutely to part with all affection to known Sin, and throughly to comply with all Duty, and then getting such a sence of interest in thee, as could make me humbly confident to avow it, not only in a day of Communion, but in the day of death, that

shall

shall put all Communion work to the Tryal.

CASE XIV.

Pleading for dispositions for a Communion.

Pleading for dispositions for a Communion.

AND now more than ordinary work comes on, for I think he that has a *Communion* work to manage, should require of himself such a frame as would be fit dying work, and O how much goes to prepare for either! I am in a great strait with it, both by reason of my manifold Guilt, and insuperable indisposition, can I go to this work under such a lifeless and heartless temper of Soul as this? what can I expect of it, but making my bonds stronger? and am I not dead enough already, that I must deaden my self more by this Ordinance, till I be in the case of them that are twice dead, once dead by the Law, & far more sadly dead by one of the most Savoury means of the Gospel? Go to God with this concernment and plead,

Arguments. *First*, Hast thou not appointed this Ordinance for proving a mean of revival to the Soul, that complains it cannot find Life at any hand, I have tryed Prayer, Preaching, Meditation and Converse, and all of them say it is not

in me, may I believe thou hast reserv'd the honour of restoring and refreshing my Soul to this Solemnity, upon which I would gladly hope, many have said of this as one of thine said of *Goliahs* Sword, in extremity *there is none like it.* 1 Sam. 21. 29.

Secondly, Thou knows I look upon *Communicating* under a prevalent indisposition like dying under darkness, and hardness of Heart, and O what an uncomfortable case would this be! the very apprehensions of it at a distance are a terror, & I am afraid my many dead *Communions* prognosticate sadly to me, that I shall at least in a great measure, miss thy living consolations in my dying hours.

Thirdly, I have often heard that I cannot but either have a great advantage, or a sad loss by such a duty as this, and how much does it concern me, that I may not run my self into a snare, that perhaps I shall never be able to deliver my self from all my days! since there is just now so much at the stake, and I am to have a throw for it, O please to manage my Heart and Hand so, as I may fall upon the better part, and bless thee Eternally for giving me counsel and assistance to do so.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, How great is my work when I have not only to do, but undo, to do away much Guilt of a long Life, and the rooted habits of infidelity, Carnality, Pride, and Trifling in the things of God, and O, even this poor half of my work is above my time & strength, what shall I do with the rest and the better part of it, to be distinct and lively in the actings of Faith, Love, Heavenliness, Hope and Joy in thee, which are such strangers to my Soul.

Fifthly, I have had a long time to prepare for this Work, and now when I am come this length, I cannot tell what I have done with it, after I have been toyling all Night, and have catch'd nothing, if thou would but give me but
Luk 5. 5. one hopeful word, I would yet *cast out the Net*, thy Spirit breaths like the
Joh. 3. 8. Wind, that rises oftimes in a dead calm when little expected, let me be surprised at length, when *I am almost weary*
Psal. 69. 3. *of my waiting*, and let me see an hour, yea a moment of God's influences can do more than all these dayes and weeks of poor unsanctified endeavours of man have done.

CAST

CASE IV.

For Lively sense of Heavenly Communicating.

I would Gladly have a day of *Communion* made a day much to be observed by my Soul, upon the account of Great things done for it, and I desire to entertain raised Expectations of this, and I think I am allowed not to be put off with small. For this go to him thus; For lively Sense of heaven in Communicating.

First, Lord, is not such an occasion call'd a *Communion*? and I always thought this signified a *Communion* with thee, full of Friendship, Access and Familiarity, and shall it only be call'd and not found such by me? Thou that gave the Name give the thing to answer it: how hard shall it be, if I shall be said only to have got a Nominal *Communion*, and nothing of the real! Shall my solemn work be only a practical specious lye before the World, when I am giving it out at thy table, that I have what I really know nothing of? *Arguments*

Secondly, Thou allows me to call other days of Grace, even ordinary Sabbaths, Good days, because thou would have me to make them so; but I may call a *Communion* day *a great Day*, and

John. 19 31. *a high day*, shall I not find it such by more of God and Heaven upon my Soul than ordinary? and this only will oblidge me to give it that Name.

Thirdly, I know thou hast made this poor world to be a very Valley of Trouble and Tears to thine own especially, but yet thou hast allowed them some good days in it, and if it were not so they could not bear through in the ill that are so many and bitter. O when shall they find these Sun-shines amidst the storms, if not at *Communion Seasons*, wherein they may expect God will come down, and deal familiarly with man! if it were not for some such Incid Intervals, many of thy People could not think of staying out their weary time here.

Fourthly, May I get as much on such a Mercat day, as may carry me on happily unto the next, and that through all such Provision-places on the road, I may be brought to glory at length, and if thou wilt make the rain to fall and *fill the pools* I shall continue digging them while *travelling through the valley of Baca*. Thou knows many a bitter storm may be in my face, many a dark and dismal like hour of Tryals, terrors and tremblings may be awaiting me

Psal. 84. 6.

and

and it cannot be little acquaintance with and experience of thee and thy way, that can answer all such days of need.

Fifthly, I would *care for a long journey* of Death, that is before me, and may I manage for this opportunity as the remembrance of it may meet me with an unexpressible comfort, when all the things of Earth, will disclaim to be of any use or relish unto me. 1 Kings 19. 7.

CASE XVI.

Direction in the first Adventure.

THis may be thy first time of drawing near to God in the Solemn work of *Communicating*, and it imports thee very much to summond up all the seriousness thou art capable off, even with an eye to this, that thou may be well guided in thy first Adventure; turn it into Prayer so; Direction in the first adventure

First, Let me get my first approach well mannaged, for there is much in breaking fair, and it is very probable, I shall find my Case throw most of my days in a great measure according to my way of first *Communicating*: if I deal deceitfully in God's Covenant, I may have much ado to get above it all my Life. Therefore let me be honest in all, that it may be the precious well

chosen Seed Corn, which shall yield a Noble increase in the following of all thy other Ordinances.

Secondly, I took on Baptismal engagements, or rather my Parents took them on for me, when I knew not what was a doing; but now I must be personally explicite and distinct, and all the weight of the work lyes upon my self, being that none in this Case can stand for me, and at this time I am to declare whether my Baptismal vows be altogether lost, or whether they shall turn to any good account, he has in a great degree lost his Baptism, who cannot find a heart for thy Supper.

CASE XVII.

A Frame for a Farewell Communion.

A Frame for a farewell *Communion.*

BUT it may be it enters into thy thoughts with a deep impression, that this may be the last time that thou shalt be witness and Sharer of this privilege, it concerns thee therefore to request,

Arguments. *First*, O! how seriously ought that to be mannaged, which is never to be done again, and with what liveliness of Soul should I bid farewell to Ordinances, Sacraments and Prayer, and all that

that I have found any way made useful, for advancing me to Heaven.

Secondly, I have now a Noble opportunity of *paying Vows, which my Lips uttered, and my Mouth Spake, when Trouble was upon me*, as well as of making them of new; did I not then ly upon knees of Soul and Body before God, protesting that if he would give me a day fit for it, I would make well grounded and Zealous appearances for him: and now since this may be my last happy Opportunity, O! what a pity is it I should go off this stage, without leaving some Testimony that he hath done great things for such as I am. Psal. 66. 13, 14. Psal. 66. 16.

Thirdly, If I could perform this work with an extraordinary vigour of Soul, I might probably carry the fresh sense of it with me to the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and it would be no small Cordial for me there, to think it is not long since my Soul humbly said, *O Lord, thou art my Lord, also my Record is in Heaven and my Witness on high*, and he gave his *Amen*, and set the Seals to it. I Remember the place and the day, but the Reflection that the last Communion work was unfaithfully done, will be a very unhelpfull Companion. Psal. 16. 2. & 16. 19.

Fourthly, I find I have noe Argu-

ments of seriousness than I ever had before; I see a Death and Judgement far nearer than formerly, my Sins are grown to a greater number, and need a very broad covering of Righteousness, and I am, or may be sensible of my vast Short-comings of resolved and hoped for Attainments, more now than before; do not all these cry aloud, a greater Seriousness than I used to have at this work is now necessary?

CASE XVIII.

Complaint of a strange Heartlessness in me, daily after a Communion.

Complaint of a strange Heartlessness in me daily after Communion.

BUT, what shall I say when I find my heart, to my sense, more dead after a *Communion work* than at any time, so as I cannot get any relish of the precious things of God maintain'd, tho' I thought I had it before the day of Solemnity? Thou may plead to this purpose against this evil,

Arguments.

First, I cannot but say it must be a base and mercenary temper of Spirit I am alwayes in, that I am so busie and humble in requesting thee before the *Communion* day, when I have some great thing to look for, which can only be had at thy hand; and when that day is over, I turn strangely negligent of thee, as if

Psal. 73. 25, 26.

I had now got my turn done, and thou wert no more to be owned, but for fashion's sake, till the next occasion wherein I'le have much to do to return.

Secondly, As I cannot think, that preparation for such a work is the Labour of a day, or a month, but rather of a track of Life, so I cannot think the fullfiling of my Engagements is to be put over in the days in which I made them, and not rather that the easiest of all is the *Communion* day, for debt is alwayes sweetest in the taking on; have I not on such a day given all the days of my Life much a do, when I said that I would be, and act for God, as long as I could act any thing, and from the very first occasion must I fall to the verifying of this, and not intermit a day, *but daily perform my vowes?* Psal. 61. 8.

Thirdly, How can this heart think to hold out in a state of Glory, without interuption, and yet without wearying through endless ages, when it is such a burden to wait upon God some few days or hours. I must either give up my pretensions unto that state, the whole of which lies in that, *there his Servants shall serve him, whose rest is never* Rev. 22. 3 & 4. 8. *ceases, or else endeavour to have my dis-*

Isa. 43. 22. *Fourthly*, What shall I answer for wearying of God, of Christ and Heaven, which hath so much contempt in it, I am sure if any should weary of my company, so much as I find my self to weary of mine, I would bestow it upon another. O how unworthy of Life is he that practically prefers almost any thing to the God of that Life! and do not I so, when I can endure almost any thing longer than being in thy presence?

Fifthly, I cannot but look upon it as a fearful symptom, that I am so contrary to the common sense of all the Saints; when they are in any measure at themselves, they come accesse unto God, liveliness in duty, delighting in things of God, worthy to be matter of request, and when they attain them, of giving God praise: can these be a burden and a terror unto my Soul?

Sixthly, O Lord, I acknowledge, I have not only need to keep a fast before this awful Ordinance I have adventured upon, that I may humble my self and beg of thee preparation; but I have need to keep a Fast after it, for guilt in the performance, & indisposition following upon and I am afraid, flowing from it; and it must be discouraging, that a smiting sense of this is all I have ordinarly

early for the joys of the Lord, which this Ordinance, in any houre, is afford. How much does it doth my thanksgivings, which I owe for the greatest mercy that thou ever bestowed upon man, To find my frame as it were professedly declaring I have no interest in it?

Seventhly, It's a sad token that my Spiritual provision makes still a sickness, fainting and loathing with me, and it evidences there is some prevalent distemper within the Vitals, that the nutriment never can subdue, but which turns all to uselessness and hurtfullness, so as it feeds upon these precious things, that were ordained for Life.

Eighthly, It gives me sometimes a fearful suspicion, I am too like that Traitor, unto whom the *Devil entred after the Sop*, that my heart rages after one vanity or another, immediatly after *Communion* work, as much (if not more) as at any time. Joh. 13. 27.

CASE XIX.

Pleadings for the Blessings of a Sabbath.

THOU desires to have the Sabbath day made very reviving & refreshing to thy Soul, and it is oft times thy complaint, that many in former times have had better frames Pleadings for the Blessings of a Sabbath.

on

on every day of the week, than thou haſt upon thy Sabbath, and on their Sabbaths more elevation of Soul, than thou haſt in thy Communion Solemnities. Thou may represent this before the Throne of Grace, ſo,

Arguments Mark 2. 27. *First*, Thou haſt made *the Sabbath for man, not man for the Sabbath*; I deſire to look upon it as a privilege, and I know that it was appointed for greater meaſures of acceſs to thee, and delighting in thee than ordinary; I hope thou wilt not ſuffer ſo noble an inſtitution to fall utterly ſhort of its deſign, but ſince thou haſt made it for us, let us have the good of it.

Secondly, The buſineſs and diſtractions of the Week eat out my frame, and I believe thou haſt appointed the Sabbath to return ſo often, that ſo good impreſſions may not quite wear out, &c I would be greatly oblidged, if thou would make the Sabbath recover my loſt Taſte and Savour of thee, and things of Heaven.

Thirdly, Since thou calls me from the buſineſs of Life, to waiting upon thee, ſo as to mind nothing elſe, I hope thou wilt give me more than will make up all the loſs the wordling thinks himſelf at, by interrupting his career after the things

things of this Life for a day, and reward all my pains; and my near approach unto thee, being brought *unto thy Holy Mountain, and made joyfull in the House of Prayer*, shall do it, and infinitly more.

Fourthly, O Give me such impressions on a *Sabbath day*, as shall be seasoning to my Soul throw all the week, and make all the duties of Religion go the better, throw the rest of my days: for I desire to look upon such an opportunity as a mercat day, in which I am to provide my self with fresh supplies, to carry on my Journy to Heaven.

Fifthly, I take the *Sabbath* to be a day for giving relief of Spirit, from the Perplexities of ordinary Week-day thoughts and cares, it's the blest retreat from the confusions and storms that are about us for most of our time, in which as upon a couch we may lay our cares and troubles.

Sixthly, Thou used to honour this day by doing great things on it, among men there are days of hospitality, wherein they use to keep open house, and entertain Strangers Liberally; as all days are such with thee, so the *Sabbath* in a special manner, and as thou hast said a fast was to be kept, by undoing the heavy burdens and letting the

oppressed

oppreſſed go free, by dealing our bread to the hungry, and bringing the poor, who are caſt out, into our Houſe; we hope we may argue with thee, thou wilt Honour thy *Sabbath*, by doing ſuch things for us, and we come to thee in a good day, a day appointed for feaſting and rejoycing, in which men are moſt liberal.

Seventhly, This is the day on which we deſire to celebrate thee to the end of the World, upon the account of the noble Original of it, even the riſing of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, from Death, upon the faireſt morning that ever ſhin'd on Earth, that ſhin'd with more than Rays of the Natural Sun; for two Suns roſe that day; both the never dying Lamp of Nature, and the Sun of Righteouſneſs; without which all our days had been perpetual darkneſs: and as he roſe that day, he roſe in order to aſcenſion, that he might *give gifts unto men*, to which it's very futeable thou ſhould do ſo for us this day.

Eighthly, The *Sabbath* is an emblem of that everlaſting day of the viſions of thy face, wherein thy Servants ſhall ſerve thee without wearineſs in; it always put us in remembrance of that, and incite us to an elevation of ſoul

ſome-

somewhat answerable to the hopes of that Glory and to the work thy Saints are doing in the higher House.

CASE XX.

Fears of death in youth, or midst of days.

IT may be that thou art sometimes discomposed with the thoughts of this that it shall be thy lot to dy in the flower of thy Life, and the very supposition of it is ingreatful; but thou must prepare for a case which thou hast seen to be so usuall and in order to it, Go and deal with the God of thy Life, to this purpose. Fears of death in youth or midst of day.

First, Lord, thou knows it's a great matter, for one to have all his work put by before the *midst of days*, to be making ready for dying requires the application of a long Life, and they who have had the longest and busiest day, when they came to the last, have thought they had something yet further to do, e're they could make the important step into Eternitie: it cannot but affect me that I should get less time than many of the most earnest wrestlers with God: it's true I deserve it less, but need it more than they. *Arguments.*

Secondly, Thou knows nature is strong in the spring of my Age, and Life that

is

is fresh is full of Natural sweetness, and the comforts of life have a strong impression upon him that has not yet learned the vanity of it, by the experience of many troubles, that riper Years always bring; it is not easie to get all those overcome, so as to be willing to die, and therefore I will need a great measure of Grace to subdue them and me to a kindlie submission, in such a case: only give me this, what matter though I should die, having a short life, & a scanty measure of its pleasures, if full of the Holy Ghost; this shall do more than make up the want of what I and all Young Persons are so Naturally bent upon, *length of days.*

Thirdly, Thou hast made *length of days* a great Blessing, and hast been pleas'd to propose it as an excitement to Obedience in one of thy Commands: I take it as such, and therefore am very ready to look upon the denial of it as a Judgement: did thou not promise to the man that set his Love upon thee, *thou would satisfie him with length of days, and make his eyes to see thy Salvation?* allow me to plead with thee, since thou may not see it fit to satisfie me with *length of days*, O Satisfie me without it, and if I may not have those

Exod. 20. 12.

Psal. 91. 16.

first

first part of that promise made out, let me have the second, which will do incomparably better, for if I *see thy Salvation*, although mine eyes should be surprizingly for ever shut unto the light of life, I shall reckon I have nothing more to seek, and I shall never complain, that life which had days and years for its measure, is changed for that which knows none.

Fourthly, They who come to age may be said to go to a Grave, but they who die in the Strength of life, are reckoned to be cut off, and thou knows cutting is painfull, and terrible. If such an eminent Saint as *Hezekiah*, lamented *cutting off in midst of days*, what may be expected of me? and if *Heman* under apprehensions of such a thing, goes out to so great a length in his Mourning, *Lord, I am cut off from thy hand whom thou hast no more in memory, even free among the dead like those that lye in the Grave, wilt thou shew Wonders to the dead, &c.* I hope thou wilt pity my fears, and forgive my great averseness to such a call, if thou should order it for me. Isa. 38. Psal. 88.

Fifthly, Lord I would gladly have passed dayes in time, with these that are in the land of the living, but if thou shut deny

Pſal. 30. 9. Pſal. 88. 10, 11, 12. deny me the occaſion; *ſhall the dead praiſe thee? ſhall they riſe that they may Bleſs thee? ſhall thy Loving kindneſs be told in the Grave, or in the land of deep Forgetfulneſs?* there is no light there for reading the Book of thy Mercy, and there is no tongue there to ſpeak of, or to God, *but the living, the* Iſa. 38. 19. *living he ſhall praiſe thee*, as I thought to have done: if I am not allowed to ſtay and do it, O! let me have that diſparring-like queſtion, *ſhall the dead riſe and bleſs thee?* anſwered, They ſhall, and thou among them ſhalt do it to better purpoſe, after the inſtruments of thy ſpeaking, and ſinging God's praiſe are refined, by being laid in duſt, untill a Reſurrection day when the charge Iſa. 26. 19. ſhall be given, *awake and ſing ye that dwell in duſt: for thy dew is as the dew of Herbs.*

CASE XXI.

Fear of dying under a Spiritual Cloud.

Fear of dying under a Spiritual Cloud.

BUT I am afraid that though I may be ſafe in my dying work, I ſhall not have a comfortable and Savoury of going from the Stage of life, and to ſit under a *Cloud* is a great diſadvantage; If this be thy Caſe (and under it is a very allowable concern)

go

Go to the Throne of Grace, and Plead after this manner.

For the author of this book,
Dr Thos Harrison, see Ware's
writers of Ireland. He was
a native of Hull, was Chaplain
to Oliver Cromwell, with whom
he came over to Ireland
& there he used to preach
in Christ Church
in Dublin every Sunday time
when the use of the Liturgy

when the use of the Liturgy
was forbidden, & Deans and
Chaptors were generally
silenced. His Hymn Lorica ap-
peared in 1655.
He afterwards published a
Sermon at the Protestors'
Death, entitled "Threni
Hibernici." 4to Dublin 1659
Was reflection to Calamy's
Account of the ejected Min-

See Notes and Queries

2nd Series I. p. 181. (1856.) for

notice of this book and its

Editor Henry Ecroyd Esq.

The 'Lancs Lancs' was first

published in 1653-8.

writers - Vol - p - 123) for more
particulars concerning him

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Both parts are in this volume:
Pt I - p - 1 - 154 Pt II - p - 155 — 280.

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A copy of the
Song Copyright of this book
printed at Kirkbride, Duff.

See Notes and Queries

written - Vol - p - 123 for more
particulars concerning him

=

Both parts are in two volumes:
Pt I - p. 1 - 154 Pt II - p. 155 - 280.

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Go to the Throne of Grace, and Plead after this manner.

First, Lord, I acknowledge, If I should perish altogether, it is no more than Justice, and if I be Saved, it is even more than Mercy; although I should not have any of the first fruits of it here, by hope and joy in the vallie of the shadow of Death, so naturally dark, I have so many sad provocations to charge my self with, that I cannot wonder though thou should shake me strangely, and humble me to the very dust, e're I get away; yet I come to thee and plead it is not only my comfort, but my duty, to be in case to die full of the hope of Glory. *Arguments*

Secondly, Thou knows I should give a Testimonie for God upon many Occasions, and there is none fitter than a day of Death, when my words would take deepest impressions, and be best believed, and I would gladly leave something that might be to the Glory of thy Name, when I am gone, O how infinitly should I esteme my self obliged to thee, if I might contribute any thing, for Raising a good report of the precious new and living way of Salvation through [illegible] making any Soul fall in love

with it, and I am ſure, the moſt graceleſs Sinner might take ſome hope, if he could ſee ſuch a perſon as me greatly owned of God in ſuch an extremity, and the humble when he ſees it, alſo would be glad: may I urge this? I have done little for thee in Life, may I make up the many defects in this matter, by doing thee ſome piece of remarkable ſervice at death.

Pſal. 69. 32. Pſal. 34. 2.

I mind to have heard of two men, the one very pious and the other graceleſs, the former dyed with very little hope and joy, the other turning a penitent dyed with much of both; a Reaſon was given, becauſe the pious man had given Teſtimony for God by his life,

Thirdly, It is more than a ſingle Death, to die in darkneſs & uncertainly about the everlaſting Concern, and to be at that, dy I moſt, and how, I cannot tell, is the moſt cutting thought a waking and Jealous Soul can have, and who ever care dare to go from this Life, not knowing where they ſhall land, whether at the fair Haven, the peaceful Harbour, or in horrour and deſperation? I muſt ſee if poſſible, ſafe ground to light upon before I leap, the fear of falling upon the dark and Iron ſhoar that will daſh me in pieces Eternally, ſeems even to haſten death that I am ſo afraid to look upon.

Fourthly, I have prayed for thy Comforts many times before now, but I never needed them ſo much; it muſt be a ſtrong Cordial, that can bear up under the ſenſible and preſſing arrests of Death.

Death. Death's passage is such a dark- the other
some dismal-like vail, that I dare not was to
think of entering into it, without thy give it at
being with me in a most signal manner; his death,
and thy *Pastoral stays and Rod to com-* Psal. 23. 4.
fort me. Nothing less can reconcile
me to death, and make me give it it's
just Name, calling that last enemy a 1 Cor. 3.
friend; if ever thou was a friend, shew 22.
it in the time of need, this I think shall
be among my last requests, may I even
plead upon this account thou would
answer it.

Fifthly, I had an eye to this, that I might dye comfortably, in almost all my Supplications which I have been making to thee upon knees of Soul and Body, and If I be denyed it, what ground shall I have for suspecting all I have done, as rejected of God, especially in such a plight of jealousie, as my Soul is now in: must I die and this conclusion in my heart or mouth, all my poor endeavours I had some expectations to get good of, are now gone, and what shall I look to, when Faith and Prayer, which I tought were proven reliefs to my Soul in distress, are now to me as the waters that Fail?

CASE XXII.

Fear of Death's being the entry to a worse.

Fear of death's being the entry to a worse. 2 Sam. 23. 5.

BUT it may be thou art afraid of worse than this, even that thou shalt not be found to have an interest in the *Everlasting Covenant*, when thou comes to dying, for thou dare not assert it now, and thou cannot tell what thou shalt do, if thy case be no better then, than it is at present: upon this go & lay the sense of thy trouble before God, in such Arguments as these?

Arguments.

First, O what a hard thing shall it be for me to be pinch'd between these two, an unwillingness to go, and an inability to stay! shall it ever come to that, die I must, ready or unready.

Secondly, Wilt thou pull me away from Time, and all the enjoyments of it, without preparing me some way, by helping me to a resignation to thy self, which I can never attain without hope of Glory, this would be like a rending of the Caul of the Heart, which looks to be an act of heavy indignation, and can be constructed by me nothing less than a dragging of a malefactor to the Prison, and from thence to the Execution.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, I think I can appeal to thee, it is not so much my love to all the desireable things of Time, that makes me so unwilling to think of dying, as my doubtfulness of my Eternal state; and I find a far greater difficulty in attaining the comfortable hope of Heaven than to get the heart deadned to all the pleasures of Life; but thou knows when I have both to wrestle with the Love of a natural Life, and the uncertainty about my lodging, when I yeild it up. I have much ado to be willing to venture all at one cast.

Fourthly, Yet I shall say although it be a kind of death to me, to think of death without evidences for Heaven, be pleas'd to hold me busy by the calls of approaching death upon the one Ear, and of a doubting Conscience upon the other, rather as let me securely pass over, and lose the day of my opportunitys, although I would be glad to be holden busy in a more kindly way, if thou would allow it. Heb. 2. 16.

Fifthly, O acustome me to make Death familiar to my self, by frequent thinking of it, and thereby less terrible: shall I be content to meet with it in a surprise? and it will be so, if I should live a Thousand years without expecta-

tion of it: a surprise makes a crosse twice double. It's sad policy to turn the back on this last and great Enemy, because I see not how to have assurance in the day of my engageing with him, it gives me a kind of peace too dear bought, by rendering him more dangerous.

Sixthly, How can I be so unwilling to meet with death upon any account? is not this the great errand of my coming into the world, to dy well? and, indeed it's little worth our while to Live, if it were not to make ready to Die.

Seventhly, There is a great number of the most Noble Spirits in the World before us, that have gone thro' Death, some with more some with less ease, is there none of these whom I can say, as *Thomas* did of *Lazarus*, *let us go die with him*, and that I may do so, why am I not at the pains to get my doubtfullness, the great obstacle remov'd.

John 11. 16.

Eighthly, What tho' it be a dark and dismal like passage, it opens a way to a sight of God, *whom no man may see and live*, but many have dyed and seen him, mortality cannot bear that sight, eyes inlightned with Glory can; help me in view of this to a nobler Ambition of having that darkness done away, that makes the Porch of Glory to be of such a dismal aspect.

Exod. 33. 20.

CASE

CASE XXIII.

Savouring the things of Time too much.

BUT alace! that I find thy poor world smells like Paradice to my Nostrils, which is a sad sign, I am of the Earth Earthly, and I would gladly have my affections deadned to Time, before I be taken from it. Go and plead with God thus, Savouring the things of time too much.

First, Lord thou hast made my Soul with an appetite after immortality, and Infinitness, which seems to cry out even when I am not sensible of it, God or nothing, Christ or else I am undone, it cannot be supposed a Soul can live on dust and shaddows, the unseen vital substance must be committed to thee that are *Substance*, *Light* and *Life* to it. *Arguments*

Secondly, Why does thou bring me under so many disappointments, if it be not to deaden me by degrees to the things that are here, some there are whom thou sweetly draws, ticeing them on to Glory, by the benign influences both of Grace and Providence beating warmly on their heads, others thou must drive, and I am one of these, if thou should hound me to Heaven, what matter so be that it prove effectual, tho' every thing should seem to have a commission

to be unkind, but if it prove not effectual, I have poor upmaking for all the troubles of a wearisome Lot.

Thirdly, Thou has said thou hast a Joh.4.14. Water, *that whosoever drinks of he shall thirst no more*, O! lead me to the Spring whence that does flow; and if thou would do it, it would cure me of a burning disease, of which I languish and die. I have heard the report of it, but the Faith of Gods Elect only can give credit to it: let me have as much of this, as can show me where and what it is, and as much love as shall make me restless, till I set out more vigorously for attaining to it.

Fourthly, Are Meat, and Drink, and sleep, Fame, Honour, Gold and Faces of Dust worthy to keep me from a God? O what is all this empty World, that we should so desire to live forever with Flesh and Blood!

Fifthly, Perswade me that my troubles grow out of the very flock of my Comforts, and thou needs do no more to render me miserable, but make use of my pleasures against me, by blasting them: for when affections are lively to the World, to suffer the loss of it is like the rending of the Flesh from the bone, but deadened Flesh is not sensible, and

a Mortified Soul would feel little pain in that which Nature counts an ſuffer-able.

CASE XXIV.

Spiritual in all manner of Converſation.

IF it be thy trouble that thou haſt a great difficulty, to keep up lively impreſſions of God, in midſt of the buſi-neſs or Diverſions of this Life, Plead after this manner.

Spiritual in all manner of Converſation

Arguments

Firſt, I deſire to lament it as a great evidence of Spiritual Dulneſs and Stupidity, that tho' thou be the ſence and meaning of all the Creatures in my view, they being all Letters of thy Name, yet I can read ſo little of God out of them; this is as if I were ſtill turning over Letters and Syllabs of the faireſt Books, and never able to make a word of ſence out of them all.

Secondly, It ſhows that there is ſomething worſe than even ſtupidity in my Nature, a woeful diſpoſition making an Oppoſition perpetually between God and his Creature: the Creatures were all form'd to be uſefull in helping Man up to the thoughts and Enjoyment of their and his Lord, and ſhould be uſed as ſuch; but I place them between thee and me, ſo as I cannot ſee thro' them, and

and I rob thee of thy due, which I Sacrilegiously bestow upon them.

Thirdly, Help me to consider, it were a far wiser course to be traceing up the Streams of Created Enjoyments, till I come to the Spring of all, and there sit down with a contentful acquiesence, in that which the most refined Creatures cannot allow. If I find any pleasure here, may I argue, there must be infinitly more in that Source, from which it flows? and it's a pitty to drink of the streams so muddy, so bitter and so shallow, while the Fountain is so near: and if I find disappointments, may I Argue my self upwards toward thee? since thou
Psal. 36 9. makest all Cisterns run dry, I must have Refreshment in the Well of Life that is with God.

Fourthly, Thy Creatures and thy Providences are more constant means of Correspondence with thee, than even thine Ordinances, which I have but at sometimes, whereas these meet me in every place, and every Case, and cry aloud that I should get up, and come away to him, they always bear witness for. O! what Advantage might I make of this, if I should never see the light of this Sun, but I should also think, it shows me far beyond it self, even to

&c. that

that Fair Original Glory, that is in the Maker of it, and if I should never see my common Provisions of Meat and Drink, but they should point out the hand that gives them.

Fifthly, When shall I be so Spiritual, as to find every place like a Chappel for Secret Stolen and Sweet Devotions, and every Stone and Pile of Grass in the Field, like a Book for helping my Meditations of thee, I know that it is not according to Occasions the heart is, but according to the Heart Occasions are, a Spiritual Soul will ravish an Opportunity from the croud of Business, and see it fairly lying in the way, when others have no thought of it; but a carnal heart finds the loud noise of this World, Diversions and Throngs even at a Communion Table. O then I may my Heart be above my Hand, whatever my hand be about, and may I do all my Ordinary Actions so, as to refer them all to God, and thereby put an Excellency on them, by making them all services done to thee, and may all the Creatures seem to want their lustre and their relish, except withal, I have something of thee.

CASE

CASE XXV.

Assured Hope of Glory.

Assured hope of Glory.

BUT it may be thou art greatly concerned to have a well grounded Assurance of an Interest in Heaven, as a perpetual Companion of all thy Duties and Tryals, and indeed thou art allowed to Plead for it, yea Commanded to attain it, as a main duty of Religion, for the neglect of which thou wilt not be able to answer; upon this thou may make thy Applications to the Throne of Grace, so.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Arguments. *First*, The want of Evidences for Heaven oft-times marrs my giving thee Praise, or at least makes it very flat and dull: for when I suspect that this Work shall not hold out eternally with me, but that Death shall make me change my Note to Despair and Howling, my Soul cannot get up to that Eelevation which becomes and which I would gladly set my Praises unto.

Secondly, It cannot but make me prosed in all my Duty's very faintly, when I know not but my next step may be utter Ruine to me; Whereas if thou would be pleas'd to give me so much Light, as would show Salvation always before me, I would set out with Resolution

lution and Vigour, knowing my Labour should not be in vain, and should be asham'd to grudge Pains in Duty, or Pain in Affliction, while Promising to my self *a weighty Crown of Glory*. 1 Cor. 15. 58.

Thirdly, All who ever attain'd unto a patient continuance in well doing, *did look for Glory and Immortality*, and they who counted *their light Affliction for a moment, not to be compared to the Glory to be revealed, did look at things not seen, and Eternal, and not at what was seen*: I cannot think to be insure at both hands, to cast my self out of the enjoyments I might have in life, and have nothing to look to beyond it, nature must have something to fill its eye and stay it self upon, and my Resolution for thee will starve, if Hope go not out frequently to the invisible Regions of Light, to Forrage, and bring home Provisions for restoring and keeping it fresh and Vigorous. Rom. 2. 7. 2 Cor. 4. 16. 17. 18. 1 Cor. 15. 19.

Fourthly, Were not all these who are raised to Glory now, such as I am, they were at first Strangers to God, and great Grace prevented, and made them become thine in the best of Bonds, and even when their Hearts were taken in by thee, many an unworthy and unthankful neglect of God have they been guilty

guilty of, and many a dark and dismal hour have they gone thro', what by inward, what by outward Tryals in their Case, many a Heartless Heart have they had in Serving of thee, and Complaints have taken up most of their time, when they came to pray, yea even to praise, but all these things are over with them now, and they forget their Misery, and Remember it as Waters pass away, old things are done away.

Fifthly, I am ready to reckon a great deal of sinfulness lyes in Sins of Commission, and no doubt there does, without so much being troubled for sins of Omission, the want of solid Faith, lively Affection, and longing for Heaven, where the joy of thy Presence is unconceiveable, but I desire to think now there is a greater sinfulness in such Omissions, than in some Commissions called worse, even in a frightedness at Death, a loathing to go out of the Valley of Sin and Sorrows, which shews how little esteem I have for the light and life that is above, and this is greatly owing to my want of a Comfortable Assurance of such a state.

Sixthly, But how shall I attain to a constant Faith of Assurance of Heaven, who

who have ſo ſmal Degrees of the Faith of its Reality, if Faith the Foundation ſtone be not fairly laid, my Aſſurance muſt either be an Impoſſibility, or a night dream and a Shaddow. O if I could exerciſe a frequent and ſolid Belief, that there are many in Glory before me, I think it would both put me upon longing to be with theſe Noble Souls, and alſo help to humble Expectations of ſeeing my ſelf ſo happy.

CASE XXVI.

For Proviſions of Life.

For Proviſions of Life.

BUT becauſe we are commanded to be carefull in nothing, *but in every thing by Prayer and Supplication to make known our Requeſts unto God*, and ſo we may bring all our Temporal concerns before him, if thy Caſe be that of outward pinching wants; thou may go to him, and deal after this manner. Philip. 4. 6.

Arguments

First, Lord, I have heard it belongs to thy Kingdom, *that thou opens thy hand Liberally, and ſatisfies the deſire of every living thing*, and I am ſure however unworthy I am, I'le be found within the Denomination of things, that have Life from thee, and need to have ſomething to maintain it. Pſal. 145. 16.

Secondly

Psal. 147. 9. Job 38. 39. 41. *Secondly,* Thou art pleas'd to hear *the young Ravens, when they seek their Meat from God, and the Lyons when they cry to thee:* it such natural Prayers as theirs may be answered, may not such as I make for me and mine, although they should not have Grace running throw them, be taken notice of.

Isa. 58. 7. 10. *Thirdly,* Thou hast commanded Man to draw out his Soul to the Hungry, and that he bring the Poor that are cast out to his House, and there is a Compassion thou places a great value upon, O! wilt thou be behind with thy Creatures, does thou not press such Excellent qualifications, not only from thy Word, but from thy Example, *and if thou hast Commanded us to be Merciful even as thou art so,* may not I use the freedom with thee, to Plead, shew thy Mercy as man is bidden shew his, and oft-times has done it.

Luke. 6. 36.

Fourthly, Thou hast ordered Poverty always to be in the World, for an occasion of thy Demonstrating a more immediat Providence toward them that are under it, and its more to thine Honour, to Supplie wants by less visible Channels of Conveyance, than to keep People alwise easie by obvious outward means, thine answering my need

need shall get an acknowledgment from me, greater than what a Tract of Prosperity would make? Because the more immediat Mercys are, there is the more of God, and less of the Creature to be seen in them, and this makes them justly unto all thine the sweeter.

Fifthly, Thou hast ordered Povertie to be a perpetual excitement unto dependance on, and requesting of thee, but if want be not supplyed, it will miss and marr the design of it, for the Spirit will sink by too long waiting on without an answer, and I will want grounds of confirming my belief, that thou art the helper of the Fatherless, which my Faith very much needs, and the Spirit will be Tempted to exasperation against him, of whom I desired and expected to make a good report.

Sixthly, Thou may plead with our Lord; As thou went throw the Lot of Man's Misery, thou experienced that of want, to such a degree, that oftimes thou knew not where to lay thine Head, Math. 8. 20.
or what to Eat, thou was obliged to seek a draught of Water from the Woman of *Samaria*, Joh. 4. 7.
and take subsistance that other Women contributed for, Luk. 8. 3.
work a Wonder for Paying thy Tribute Mat. 17. 27.
if thou Commanded Israel to Pity

Deut. 10. 19. Exod. 23. 9. Strangers, because themselves were once such, & they knew the Heart of a stranger, I would urge Humbly that same Argument with thee.

Mat. 8. 2. *Seventhly,* When thou wast upon Earth thou *had Compassion on the Multitude, and wrought a Miracle for bread to them.* I seek not so great a thing as a Miracle, only that thou would give Commission Psal. 22 29. that I may have *to Eat and give thee praise,* and I am told that the Court and Glory thou art exalted unto does not change thy manner toward Man.

Mat. 6. 28, 30. *Eighthly,* Thou Argued against thy Disciples being Solicitous about things of the World, by telling them that *the Lillies grow without Labour, and their Glory was greater than Solomon's, and if God cloath the Herbs of the Field, which to day are, and to Morrow are cast into the Oven, how much more will he do for his People.* I desire to plead, thou provides Nourishment and beauty to the *Lillies,* wilt thou not provide Subsistance to me, who have a rational Soul! and I would inforce this Argument, If thou do so much for the Flowers of the Field, which are made only for the use of man, what wilt thou do for the Creature it self, for whom they are made.

CASE

CASE XXVII.

Lamentation over the Confusions and Bloodsheds of the World.

BUT as Religion is the most gener- Lamenta-
ous thing in the World, thou who tion over
has acquaintance with it, wilt not con- the Con-
fine thy self narrowly to thine own Con- tusions &
cernments, This were to be wrapt up Blood-
within thy self, which thy Regard both sheds of
to the interests of God, and Mankind, the word.
can never suffer, and therefore thou looks abroad throw the Christian World, to seek out what may need thy Compassion, and thy Prayers, and thou finds the Melancholy Aspect of *War*, *Confusion* and *Bloodshed* perpetually offering to thy View, and indeed these cannot but make Rueful impressions on the Hearts of all, but an Unnatural Set of men, who love to have a Living on the Miseries and Deaths of others. Thou considers not only the loss of so many Subjects of each Kingdom in the Field of Battel, but that many Souls are Snatcht away unready, unto a woful Eternity, and also that even these who are not Witnesses of that Destruction, which slays openly at noon day, feel the weight of it many ways at home: go and plead, in compassion of thy Brethren, [illegible] this pur[illegible]

Psal. 68. 30.

Arguments *First*, O Lord, was it not promised that in the good and Peaceful days of the Gospel, *the Wolf shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard shall lye down with the Kid, the Calf and the young Lyon together, and a little Child shall lead them, and the Lyon shall eat Straw like the Ox, and the Sucking Child shall play on the hole of the Asp, and the Weaned Child shall put his hand on the Cockatrice Den, and they shall not hurt nor destroy in all thy holy Mountain, when the Earth shall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea:* and all this to import unto us that the Mediator's Kingdom should be full of Peace, and his Gracious Dispensation in the Gospel should dispose Men of the most Furious and Ravenous Tempers, unto Harmlesness; and is not the Gospel called *the Gospel of Peace*, upon this very Account, as well as that it Proclaims *Peace* betwixt thee and Men. O! what a Melancholly Consideration is it, that Christianity has been able to justifie it self so little, to the Conviction of the Heathen and Mahumetan World, to be of thee, by the Reformation of the Hearts and ways of its Professors, and particularly by that love, which much of the Spirit of the Gospel consists in, how much would it contribute to the Glory of

Isai. 11. 6, 7, 8, 9.

Rom. 10. 17.

of it, if thou would perswade men to *beat* Isa. 2. 4.
their Swords into Plow-Shares, and their Mic. 4. 3.
Spears into Pruning Hooks?

Secondly, Thou hast a long time testifyed against the *Atheism* and Immorality of the Nations of *Europe*, by Bloody & Rageing Wars especially, taking Vengeance on some by them, and Warning others, but thou sees how little effect this has upon them: for they look like persons that have got *the Cup of the Lord's* Jer. 25.
Fury put into their hand, that they may 16.
drink and be mad; Be pleased to pour out thy Spirit for Reformation, when other Means will not do: one days pouring out of this would work more Humiliation and Repentance, than the pouring out all the *Blood* of a Nation can do.

Thirdly, I desire to Remember before thee, Thou said long ago, *I will not henceforth curse the Earth more for Man's sake,* Gen. 8.
for the Imagination of man's heart is con- 21.
tinually evil from his youth, and made that an Argument of Pity, which might have been an Argument of un-relenting Fury; because Thou saw that Judgment might Break him in pieces, but could never melt him, it was another thing that would reform him, even waiting and Striving by the Spirit more effectually; Therefore Psal. 78.
thou said thou would *not stir up all thy* 38.
wrath.

Wrath. Take such Compassion on us,& say kindly, Mercy will do more in one day upon the Guilty and Miserable World, than Wrath has done these many years, and I will make a Tryal of it.

Fourthly, It becomes us to lament the *Bloodsheds* of our Brethren, who are gone out from us, for we have a hand in them, our Sins have sent them to the field, and provoked thee to pour out upon them
Isa. 42.25 *the Fury of his Anger and the strength of Battel,* and therefore we'll beg of thee that thou would be their strength in the Day of their engadgement, and as soon as possible, bring to an end that sad state of things, *Wherein every Battel is with*
Isa. 9. 5. *Confusion and noise, and every Garment rolled in Blood.*

Fifthly, O! Be pleased to make the issue of the desolating Wars a compensation for the great loss of *Blood* they have cost, by an Honourable and well established *Peace,* that shall secure the Libertys and the Religion at home, and not only secure, but restore Religion abroad, and let none of our Government ever be willing to make a *Peace* either unworthy of so great Effusion of Blood, or so many Victorys thou hast been pleased to bestow on us, lest they take upon them the guilt of all that

Blood

Blood, by making it, as far as they can, be shed in vain; and let never the ceasing of Wars abroad be so unworthily acknowledged unto thee, as to turn the Seed of Wars among our selves. Let us never spare Blood that may be necessarily shed abroad, that it may be ingloriously spilt at home.

CASE XXVIII.

The Misery of the Heathen World.

BUT It may be it strikes thy Soul with a more afflicting Sence, to see what an Universal and Profound Darkness the most part of the Habitable Earth, as to God and the things of God, lyes under; not so much as the Objective Sufficiency of outward means for Salvation being allowed them, this can not but be sometimes matter of thy Astonishment, obliging thee to cry out, *O! how unsearchable are his Judgements, and his ways past finding out*, that tho all the World is to be call'd before the Judgement Seat, yet the most part of that World cannot know what way it's possible to be approven in the great day; and sometimes of thy Compassion that so many precious and Noble Souls of the Heathen world should be lost, who might probably make a far better

The Misery of the Heathen World.

Rom. 11. 33.

improvement of the Offers of Salvation, than these who have them. Upon this go and Represent before God,

Arguments *First*, What a sad matter it is that so many Souls should be Murdered in the dark, *destroyed from Morning to evening and Perishing for ever without any regard-*
Job. 4 20. *ing it*, If this work so much upon the compassion of our Nature, shall it not be noticed and helped by a Mercy that's infinite!

Secondly, Let me plead also upon the head of thine Interest, O what a pity is it, that God who made the World should have so little of its Service, and the Devil who ruined Mankind, should be so willingly and expensively adored by almost all, that he should have so much to justifie that usurped Title, *the God of*
2 Cor. 4. 4. *this World*, and seem thereby to defeat in a great measure both the design of thy Creation, and of thy greater kindness, in thy offering to restore the fallen World!

Thirdly, I have heard, *the Glory of a King lyes much in the Multitude of his*
Prov. 14. 28. *People*, and may not I plead, it would greatly contribute to thine, that thy followers were very numerous. O bring many unto thy Kingdom of Grace, and let the time be hastened, if it be possible, when

when *the King of Nations* and *King of Saints*, shall be Titles of one Signification, *all the Nations of the World becoming the Kingdoms of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, Let every man become a Monument of thy Glory, and every Tongue may be bestowed on the Acclamations of thy Praise. Jer. 10.7. Rev. 15.4. Rev. 11. 15. Psal. 86.9. Rom. 14. 11.

Fourthly, Can we think that the Promises of the Glorious days that should come upon the World under the Gospel, are all fulfilled in their full extent as yet? we perswade our selves, that there are greater things to be done, than we have seen, for the poor desolate parts of the World. *Have regard unto thy Covenant, for the dark places of the Earth, are full of the Habitations of Cruelty*; the Covenant thou made with thy Son: When shall the day dawn, when that shall be yet more accomplished, thou said of him, *It is a light thing that thou should be my Servant, only to raise up the Tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved of Israel, I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my Salvation to the ends of the Earth, and many Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall Worship* him whom Man despised, and the Nations abhorred, *that he may say to the Prisoners, go forth, and to them that are in Darkness, shew your selves, Behold* Psal. 74. 20. Isa. 49.6. 7, 9, 12,

behold these shall come from far, and lo these from the North, and from the West, and these from the Land of Sinim.

When shall that day dawn, *When the* Jer. 16. 19, 20. *Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the Earth, and say, surely our Fathers have inherited Lies, Vanity, and things wherein there is no profite. Shall we make Gods to our selves, and they are no Gods?* Rev. 21. 24. *And the Kings of the Earth shall bring their Glory, and Honour unto thy Church, and the Nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it.* Hasten the Isa. 35. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7. Accomplishment fully of that, *The Wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them: and the desert shall rejoyce, and blossom as the Rose. The Glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, and the Excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the Glory of the Lord, and the Excellency of our God.* That, *the eyes of the blind may be opened, and the Ears of the deaf unstopped. The Lame Man may leap as an Hart, and the Tongue of the Dumb sing: because of the Waters breaking forth in the Wilderness, and Streams in the desart.*

When shall it be fulfilled, That Men Isai. 42. 10, 12. shall *sing to the Lord a new Song, and his praise to the ends of the Earth, that they may give Glory to the Lord, and his praise may may be declared in the Islands. And*

from

from the rising of the Sun to the going down thereof, my Name shall be great among the Gentiles: & in every place Incense shall be offered to my Name, and a pure Offering. Mal. 1. 11.

Thou said, *All the ends of the World shall remember & turn to the Lord: and all the kindreds of the Nations shall Worship before him; for the Kingdom is the Lords and he is Governour among the Nations. The Heathens shall fear thy Name and the Kings of the Earth thy Glory.* Is not the time come yet, when we may see *the Angel flying in the midst of Heaven having the everlasting Gospel to preach to them who dwell on the Earth, to every Nation, Kindred, Tongue and People? Fear God and give Glory to him, for the hour of his Judgment is come.* And may the other Angel proclaim at the same time, *BABYLON is fallen, is fallen. May the shakeing of the Nations* be in order to this thy remarkable *coming* to the perishing World. Psal. 22. 28, 29. Psal. 102 15. Rev. 14. 6, 7. 8. Hag. 2. 6, 7.

CASE XXIX.

The withered State of Religion.

UPON That sad Consideration that Religion is at so low an Ebb in the World, even among the Professors of it this Day, by Reason of a strange Spirit of Slumber upon the better Sort, and *The Withered State of Religion.*

and a Judicial Blindneſs and Hardneſs upon the worſe, to that degree of an abſolute Inſenſibility of all the precious things they perpetually handle, Go and deal with God after this manner.

Arguments *First*, Lord, I Bleſs thee that thou haſt come under ſuch a ſweet Relation to thy People to be called *King of Saints*, Thou art *King of Nations*, as having an abſolute Dominion of property over all the World, and a Dominion of Soveraignity over all thy Creatures that are Rational. But O! what a great Difference there is between theſe two? That awfull word *King of Nations* makes but a Chain of Iron and force, whereby the Creatures are all conſtrained to bow, but *King of Saints* has in it a Chain of Gold and Love, and O! how Sweet is it to be thine in the beſt of Bonds. Thy Name *King of Nations* may raiſe great thoughts in us, for that thou can make every Inſect an Executioner of thine Anger when thou pleaſes, But *King of Saints* can raiſe far more Delightful Meditations of thee.

Secondly, This precious Title puts me in mind both of thy Peoples duties, and their Priviledges, their Duty of Subjection to thee as their Lord, and if Mortal Kings have been own'd by ſome to

have

have an absolute Power over them, shall we begrudge it to thee, to whom, and whom only, of right it belongs? and when we are Commanded to forgo comfortable enjoyments, or suffer sore troubles, shall we not pay that Imposition upon all the good things we have, Chearfully, and that not only out of the sense of the right thou has over us, but also out of thy condescendency? As in this I see our Subjection, so we see our Interest in thy defence, in thy Provision, in thy comfortable presence thou wilt give thy People, who wilt make all thy Subjects thy companions.

Thirdly, Does not the Honour of a King arise very much from the prosperity of his Subjects, & would it not greatly advance thy Honour, that it goes well with thine, that they all in some measure look answerable to the King they belong to, and whom they serve? Even mortal Princes have boasted, that they pursued the Happiness of their People, by all the Arts of Government; Wilt thou be short of thy Creatures? Surely not. And when thy People find thee always disposed to make them happy, by thy Dominion of *Grace*, they will be before thee perpetually, by Prayers and Acclamations, let the Crown on the head of the precious Redeemer flourish. *Fourthly*,

Fourthly, Acts of greateſt bounty and generoſity become Kings moſt of all perſons, and we have hear'd thou loves to Act greatly like thy ſelf, and if ſmal inſtances of Liberality oft-times diſhoncur Royal Perſons, what ſhall we expect of thee, but great & manifold allowances of gracious influences, when we are ſo low?

Fifthly, The Deadneſs of Profeſſors in the Matters of *Religion*, Wofully gives Occaſion to the Enemies, to ſuſpect their Reality, and tempts them to ſpeak inſolently, and weigh out the Violence of their hands againſt them: Whereas the Power of *Godlineſs* would give a Noble Teſtimony for it, and might have Influence to perſwade many Strangers unto thy Way, who cannot be wrought upon by Reaſoning; O! Help thy People to plead for God by their Practice, as much as by their Words, and to Pray and Believe, and Live and Suffer, and Hope & Repent their Enemies down.

CASE XXX.

The Neceſſity of Government's Owning Religion.

The neceſſity of Government's Owning Religion.

THOU cannot but ſee how neceſſary to the happineſs of a Nation, and the Flouriſhing of *Religion*, a good Government is, and that thou art upon all

all accounts obliged to beg earneſtly of the Lord, he would diſpoſe Rulers to a Spirit of Wiſdom, Religion, Juſtice and Generoſity towards their People; And Thou ought to Plead the more hard for this, Becauſe it is a very rare thing, to ſee the Shields of the Earth, who are his, acting for him. And particularly, plead with an Eye to the Maintaining of a *Proteſtant Soveraign*, on the Throne of the Dominions to which thou belongs, when ſo many are violently inclined to have one, that is Sworn to the abhorred and abandoned Darkneſs and Tyranny of *Rome*.

Firſt, Lord, may our Soveraigns Go- *Argument*
vern us, ſo as to raiſe an Emulation in the moſt conſummated Governments on Earth, and may every one of them be a Pattern to him who Succeeds, which he ſhall juſtly have the Ambition to follow, And may all the Subjects always feel themſelves under a Neceſſity to Tranſmit their Loyalty to Poſterity, by the ſenſe they have of their Goodneſs, being not only bound to them by the Tyes of Birth and Conſcience, but of moſt Cordial Affection: may Vertue & Religion Rule ſo illuſtriouſly in thePerſons of our *Rulers*, as to circulat upon theſe who are neareſt them, & from them, upon all the

Nation,

Nation, with an Universal Influence.

Secondly, Keep our Nation always under the Perswasion of it, that it is Essential to the Preservation of the *Protestant Religion*, That one who loves it, should Sit upon the Throne; and that We cannot be Safe in the Hands of One, whose Conscience & hope of Heaven binds him to ruine either our *Religion* or our *Lives*, and how Unbecoming and Unworthy it is for *Protestant Nations*, to give their Power to one, who is Devoted to give all his unto the *Beast of Rome*.

Thirdly, Let us never be suffered to forget how the *British Prince* and the *Romish Priest* conspired to make a dreadful Work with all our *Liberties* and *Religion*, our Precious things, at once, when promised the assistance of the Fiery Forces of a neighbouring Monarch, who had destroyed all in his own Dominions, who would not carry the *Mark of the Beast*: and how seasonably thou stept in, and disappointed them, so as Men of Wisdom could not find their heads, nor *Men of Might their hands*, and men of Blood refused to Fight. And let the Remembrance of these things for ever keep back our Nations from tempting God again, by laying all at the Feet of one, who is at the disposal of the greatest Enemy on Earth.

Revel. 13. 16, 17.

Psal. 76. 5.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Help our Rulers alwayes to Remember, that as they are intruſted with our Liberties, ſo they are with our Religion; and if they ſhall by Neglect, or by Surrender loſe it, they ſhall make a ſad Account for it in the Day of Judgement, and Poſterity ſhall execrat their Memory, & many Curſe them thro' everlaſting Ages, when they ſhall anſwer for the Damnation of many a Soul, beſide that of their Own, which is too much for any to bear.

Fifthly, May we not Plead, Thou would fulfil the *Promiſes* of Good Days of *Government*, ſpoken of long ago, when thou ſaid, thou would *make the Officers Peace, and the Exactors Righteouſneſs*, & that *Violence ſhould no more be hear'd in thy Land, Waſting and Deſtruction within it's Borders; but thy People ſhould call their Walls Salvation, and their Gates Praiſe. And Kings ſhall be their Nurſing Fathers, and their Queens their Nurſing Mothers, they ſhall bow down to thy Church with their Faces toward the Earth, and lick up the duſt of her feet.* *Iſai.* 60. 17, 18. *Iſai.* 49. 23.

Sixthly, We have been greatly obliged unto thee for raiſing up to us a *Forreigner, calling a righteous Man from the East unto his foot*, to be our help, when there was no help to be found at home; *Iſa.* 41.

this is a Mercy we desire, neither to forget, nor slightly remember; but to Entail the Memory of it to Generations to come. And we bless thee for directing our Government to make choice of one in the *Protestant Line*, to Support what he wonderfully Restored. O! may we find him as friendly to *Religion* & *Liberty*, as the other was: And may he place as much his glory in encouraging Good Men, and breaking Tyrany and Oppression. May *Higher Germany* be as useful to *Britain* in furnishing us with a Preserver, as the *Lower* was in giving us a Deliverer; & may we have that Heir, of our Crown, not falling unto such Circumstances as shall need his restoring; and may his Managment, when he comes to the Government, be such, as shall make a perpetual Argument of Friendship between his Country and ours.

Sevently, O Lord, may all the Rulers of these Kingdoms be Perpetually impress with a Sense of the baseness of Oppression and Persecution, and how little these contribute to the Advancement of Religion, when raised on the Account of it, and how unworthy it is of them, to harass, or embrue their hands in the blood of their Brethren; for that they cannot think, after their Manner in all Points of

of Religon, or will not dissemble, when they cannot; & let Cruelty in such matters be so Odious to every Person within the Dominions, as none may have the Confidence to be guilty of it, or if any have, he may be shuned as a Monster.

CASE XXXI.

The Decay of Religion in our Lands.

BUT It may be (and indeed thou hast too much Reason for it) thou looks upon Religion as in a very declining State within the Land of thy Nativity, And that both upon the Account, of the little Life and Power of Godliness, to be seen in the way of its Professors, & also the threatning Aspect of Things in the Government, which seems to take unkind Measures, bearing too much Appearance of a Tendency, to open a Door of Liberty, to these who would gladly have a Deliverance to work Abominations. Upon this Head, Thou may go and make Application after this Manner. The Decay of Religion. *Jer.* 7. 10

First, We desire to bless thee, That ever there was a Line of the Scripture, promising mercy to our far off Places in the world; That ever thou said to thy Son, *The outmost Ends of the Earth should be his Possession*, And, *he should be thy Salvation to the Ends of the Earth*: And that *the* *Psal.* 2. 8. *Isa.* 42. 1, 4.

Isles should wait for his Law, That *he should be the Confidence of all the Ends of the Earth, and those who are afar off upon the Sea*; May we not upon these Grounds request, thou would not suffer the Boundings of the Blessed Redeemer's Charter to be intrenched upon.

Psal 65. 5.

Secondly, Lord, as thou hast chosen our Nation above many others, so thou hast erected thy Kingdom in it, with the Glorious Ensings of long continued Combats & Sufferings, and with peculiar Priviledges of Purity in the Doctrine, Worship, Government and Discipline of thy House: Help us to Consecrate so inestimable a Blessing, to the Glory of thy Great Name, the perpetual Celebration of thy Wonders, the Reinforcement of our decaying Obedience unto thee, and to the Remembrance of them who went before us, so as we may recall unto our Practise, and Imitation, the Holiness and Zeal of their Lives, whereby they did so nobly Justifie their Profession, and exalt to the Highest pitch of Evidence, the Power of the Gospel.

Thirdly, Thou hast been pleased to bring us *into the Bond of thy Covenant*, and make us become thine, with uplifted Hands and Hearts, *Causing us pass under the Rod*, in order thereto, our Land

Ezek. 20 37.

with

with more Solemnity than in almoſt any Nation, beſide, hath at ſeveral Times dedicated it ſelf unto thee, and we have hear'd thou art not only the Faithful God, *Who keeps Covenant with them who Love thee, and keep thy Commands*, but the God who *Keeps Covenant, and ſhews Mercy* to them, who have often broken with Thee, Therefore, *According to the Word which thou haſt Covenanted with thy People, when thou brought them out of Egypt*, Let *thy Spirit remain among us. Remember*, O Lord, *Break not Covenant with us*, call to mind *for us, thy Covenant, and repent according to the Multitude of thy Mercys, when we are brought low for our Iniquities. We are the Children of the Covenant, which thou haſt made*: However unworthy, let it never be Matter of ſhame, in the rekoning of any of our Land, that we were Honoured to enter into a *Covenant* with God, and let us never be a Diſgrace unto our Solemn Engagements unto Thee.

Neh. 1. 5. Dan. 9. 4. Hag. 2. 5. Jer. 14. 21. Pſal. 106. 43, 45. Act. 3. 25.

Fourthly, Help us to conſider, how unfaithfull we ſhall be found to thee, to our Predeceſſors, and our Poſterity, if we ſhall not be careful to tranſmit Religion, with it's Luſture and Advantages, as far as we can, *to the Generations to come*, it being a Truſt committed unto

Pſal. 78. 4. 5.

us, that it may be handed down to others, and thereby when our Ruins disclaim to keep up thy Praises, they may become perpetual, by being propogated; and our Fathers having wrestled for Ordinances, with an eye to late Posterity, let us be resolved, *We will not hide what we have hear'd and known, and our Fathers have told us, from their Children, Shewing to the Generation to come, the Praises of the Lord, and his Strength, and his Wonderfull works that he hath done,* altho' we should be untender of them, as our own: Help to remember they are theirs, and how unnaturally base it is to squander away such a Noble Treasure, as Religion is, that our Children may demand from us.

Psal. 72. 17. His Name shall be as a Son to continue his Fathers Name for ever. Or shall be sonned *Filiabitur* probably to Import one Age shall tell of it to another, & so it shall be carried thro' Generations by Natural Propagation So, Psal. 45. 4. One Generation shall praise thy Works to another and he promises the Father to the Son shall shew forth Gods Truth. *Isa.* 38. 19.

Our Predecessors prayed oft, and earnestly, not only for the Continuation of Gospel Ordinances in Purity, but in their Power, their greater Glory; let us see the Fruit of their *Praying*, and *Covenanting* for so excellent Purposes, graciously made unto us.

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FINIS.

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AN

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Of the CASES in the *Supplement* to Mr. *Harrison's Topica Sacra*, which begins at the 155 Page of this Book.

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ERRATA.

IT's hoped the Candid Reader will pardon ſuch Literal Eſcapes, or Miſtakes in pointing, he finds in this Book; and amend the *Errata's*, occaſioned by the want (or Tranſpoſition) of ſome Letters, as follows.

Page 179. Line 29. read *Crimſon.* p. 187. l. 14. r. *it.* p. 192. l. 8. r. *plead.* and l. 9. read *heard.* P. 212. l. *ult.* r. *exerting.* P. 215. l. 2. r. *little* P. 233. l. 28. r. *refreſhing.* l. 29. r. *times.* l. *ult.* r. *former.* P. 236. l. 11. r. *Celebrate.* P. 243. l. 21. r. *ſuch.* & l. 27. r. *thought.* P. 186. l. 8. r. *as* to.

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